



# Tackling the Unknown in Extemp

What to do if you don't know the topic

**FAKE IT**

***TILL YOU***

**MAKE IT**

# Enter the room with confidence

- Smile at your judge
- Introduce yourself: “Hi! I’m [name/code], the [third] speaker.”
- See if the judges need more time to finish the ballot
- “May I ask how time signals will be given?”
- Read your question for the benefit of the audience



**What percentage  
of communication  
is nonverbal?**

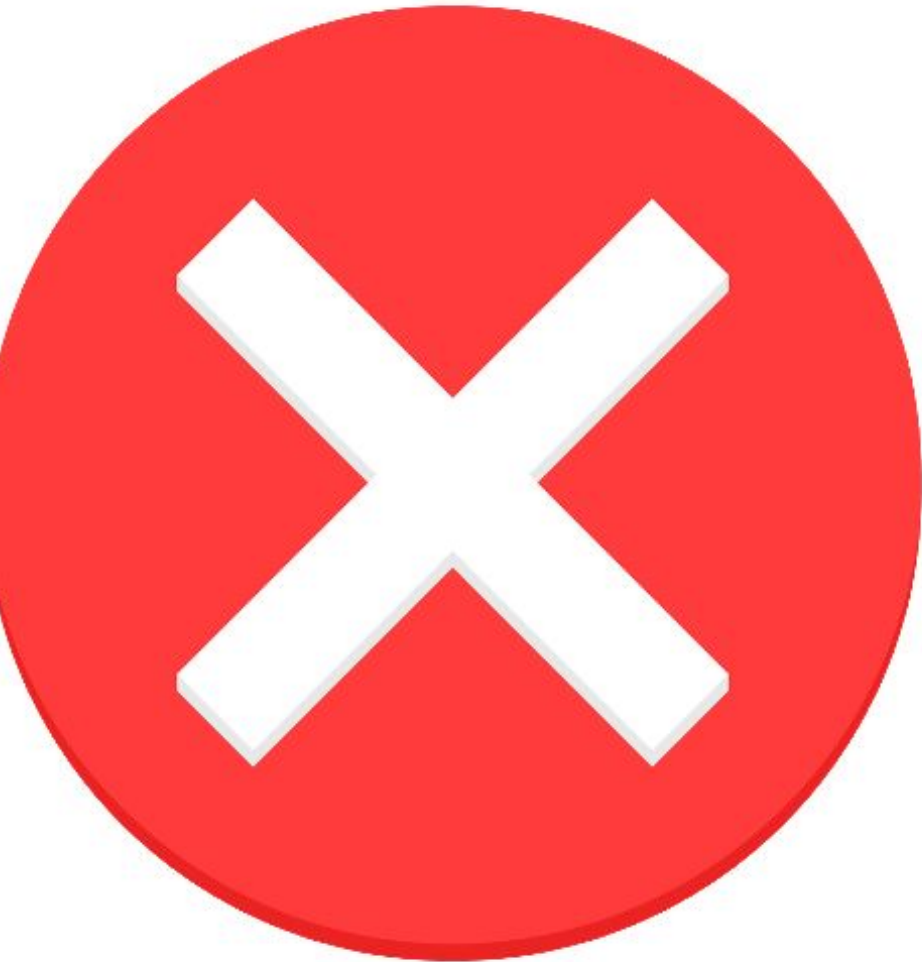


**93%**

Body language (55%) and  
tone of voice (38%)



**Gesture in the hug zone**



## DON'T

- Bring your outline into the room with you
- Look at the floor and sigh before starting your speech
- Switch eye contact in the middle of a sentence
- Look at the ceiling while trying to remember a citation
- Call attention to mistakes by correcting them

# DO

- Leave yourself enough prep time to say the speech out loud AT LEAST once
- Put your legal pad down on a flat surface so that you can practice hand gestures while saying your speech
- Take a breath instead of saying “um”
- Smile if you make a mistake

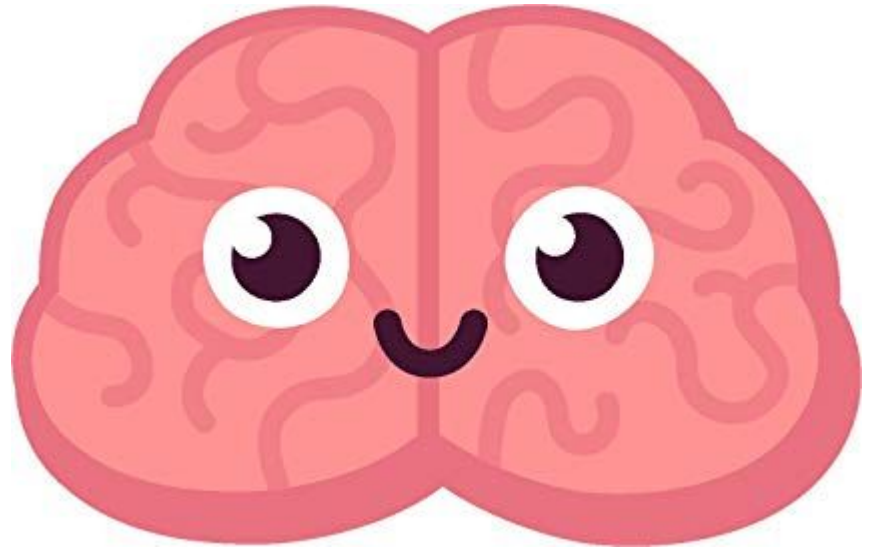




# Writing the Speech

# Brainstorm

Do some research if you know nothing about the topic; if you draw a question on Brexit, but don't know what Brexit is, GOOGLE it.



# Make Inferences

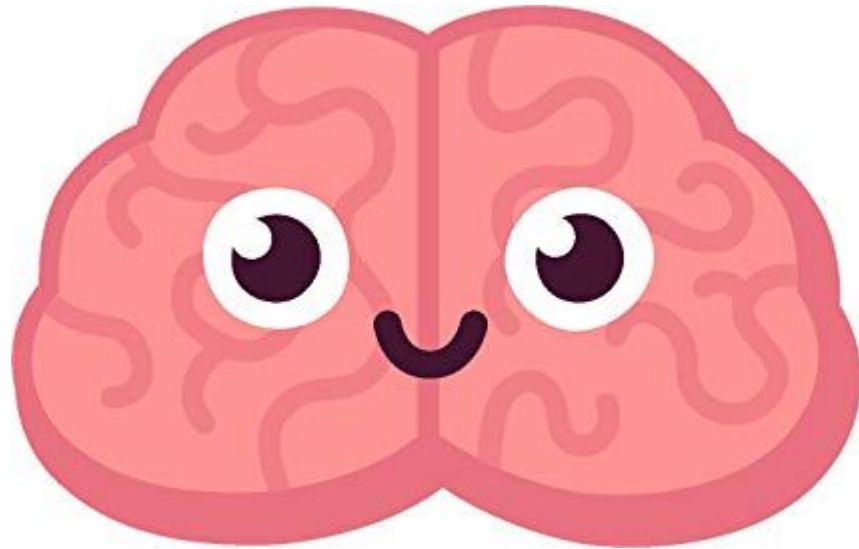
- If I don't know about the politician, what do I know about the party?
- If I don't know about the country, what do I know about the region?
- What do I know about how to win a presidential election?
- What do I know about why terrorism happens?



# Apply Frameworks

When you can, apply frameworks to a speech.

- If I don't know how to improve democracy in Vietnam, first ask what are some general characteristics of democracy? Then do some research to find out what areas Vietnam underperforms in.



# Narrow it down

If the question is very broad or general, identify 3 specific people, places, or things it might refer to.

This should be mainly done in the context.





## Stretch your sources

- If you only have 1 article, cite it in every point
- If the article quotes another source, use that as a citation too
- If you have an article from the New York Times, you can also cite it as the International Herald Tribune
- Have a CIA World Factbook & an economics textbook on hand. You will be able to cite them at least once in almost every speech.
- If you know something but you don't have an article to back it up, say it anyway
- FILE before the round





## End on a Good Note



- Make your worst point your second point
- Save your best point for last