

Lesson 7: Judge Adaption

There are two types of judges in Public Forum debate: lay judges and tech judges. Because of the differences between the two judges, you want to change your debate style, and by extension, casing, when you debate in front of each judge. You can check the judge's paradigm (basically a description of their judging preferences) to determine what type of judge your judge is.

The first major type of judge is a tech judge. Tech judges are judges that have done competitive debate in high school. They typically can understand debate jargon and can handle faster speeds.

In terms of tech judges, most times you can run whatever arguments you want and speak as fast as you want. However, make sure your case reading is **STILL CLEAR!** Additionally, you should read the judges paradigm to see if they have any specific preferences in regards to speed/arguments.

The second major type of debate judge is a **lay** judge. These judges put the public in Public Forum, as they lack experience in debate.

They are typically the parents of debaters. For this reason, you want to make the debate round understandable for someone who lacks debate experience. To do so, there are three tips for your case:

First, **stock arguments**. Stock arguments are common, simple arguments on the topic. They're the arguments you first think of when you receive the topic, the arguments that are inherently true. These arguments, while very common, are easy to understand. Thus, lay judges are more likely to buy/believe these arguments.

Second, **slower reading**. For lay judges, you want to speak slowly and make sure they catch everything you read. This means your cases should be on the shorter side (~650 words).

Third, **telling a story**. It's important to tell a story when reading a lay case — it makes your side more believable and brings everything together.