

Debate

The Debate format is most effective when a member is trying to make a decision between two choices. The Presenter watches the Forum present opposing viewpoints and argue their respective positions. The Presenter chooses the two viewpoints, provides preliminary information, then the Forum handles the rest.

Snapshot Guidelines

1) Preparation

- a) The Presenter prepares information on the two opposing viewpoints.
- b) The Coach reviews the information to ensure clarity.
- c) The Presenter and Coach decide how the teams will be divided and whether advance information will be provided.



2) The Debate Process

- a) The Coach introduces the issue, the format and the teams. (2 minutes)
- b) The Presenter shares relevant information. (5 to 7 minutes)
- c) The Forum asks clarifying questions and the Presenter responds. (5 to 7 minutes)
- d) **1st Huddle:** Each team huddles in private and prepares their side of the debate. (15 minutes)
 - i) Side 1 presents their case. (8 minutes)
 - ii) Side 2 presents their case. (8 minutes)
- e) **2nd Huddle:** Each team huddles in private and prepares their rebuttal. (5 minutes)
 - i) Side 1 presents their rebuttal. (3 minutes)
 - ii) Side 2 presents their rebuttal. (3 minutes)

3) Conclusion

- a) The Presenter shares their take-away value from the debate. (1 minute)
- b) The Forum discusses take-away value from the debate and debriefs on the process. (2 minutes)

Moderator/Facilitator Role

- During the debate, be sure the teams present their case in 3rd person, e.g. “He shouldn’t sell the company because...” Do not use the word ‘You’. Remember that the teams are debating each other, not telling the Presenter what to do.
- Encourage the teams to listen carefully when the opposing team presents their case. They should take notes so that they can effectively prepare to rebut each of their arguments.
- Splitting the teams can be done in one of several ways:
 - At the Forum meeting, names can be randomly drawn out of a hat.
 - At the Forum meeting, people can choose which side of the debate they prefer. If the result is off-balance in numbers, the Presenter and/or Coach can move people to the other side until the number of people is balanced on both sides.
 - Before the Forum meeting, the Presenter and the Coach can decide to assign people to a specific side. This could be done based on specific knowledge or perspectives of individual Forum members.

Examples

- Which market should I focus on this year – commercial real estate or residential real estate?
- Should I bring in a business partner with equity, or should I continue to fly solo?
- Should I accept the offer to buy my company or not?