

Facilitators of Friendship: Structured Teamwork Drills With a Debate Squad of Year 10 and Year 11 Boys

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Abstract

Adolescent boys are primed for competition, and they are encouraged to view their peers as rivals. At the same time, friendships between boys may weaken, and many adolescent boys experience a breakdown of social connectedness during their time at high school. Although boys are placed in teams regularly within an educational context, there is little, if any, time dedicated to teaching them how to work collaboratively with teammates. My action research project investigated how equipping boys with teamwork skills enhanced collaboration. The project also explored whether a focus on explicitly teaching the boys on my debate team how to collaborate might increase the social connectedness between them. The squad had received previous feedback that their individual speeches were strong, but the overall team lacked cohesion. I thought perhaps that the breakdown might be happening during the unsupervised pre-debate preparation time and so, by helping them develop a shared strategy for that preparation time, I hoped the boys would practice their communication and collaboration skills—two skills that are associated not only with teamwork but also with selflessness and positive masculinity. To achieve this goal, I guided the boys through discussions about what it means to be a team player and led several teamwork drills designed to explicitly teach the boys the skills necessary for communication and collaboration, such as active listening and respectful disagreeing. Lastly, I facilitated the co-creation of a strategy they could implement during the preparation time for future debates. I collected both quantitative and qualitative data throughout the project. My findings indicate that the boys did not notice a significant improvement in collaboration skills as a result of the action. Rather, they noted something far more important for young men today: the development of greater bonds and

stronger social connections with their teammates. In short, they established authentic friendships. Moreover, the boys began to describe participation in the debate squad as “fun” and also displayed more empathic behaviors after our drill sessions. This project highlights the importance of extracurricular activities as a context where boys can develop friendships with other boys. Team or group activities are integral to helping boys develop healthy and positive social connections with peers. However, these bonds do not necessarily happen organically. Educators play an important role in explicitly teaching boys how to interact collaboratively with teammates, and educators at boys’ schools, in particular, can act as facilitators of friendship formation.

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A key marker of healthy masculinity is a boy who feels socially connected and secure in his relationships with other boys. A boy who has authentic social connections with other boys is less inclined to feel pressure to conform to hostile and aggressive masculine stereotypes. Research indicates that friendships between boys become more superficial during high school and these adolescent friendships lack the emotional depth of those between pre-adolescent boys as well as those between girls (Erdley & Day, 2017; Flynn et al., 2014). In general, boys are less likely than girls to report having a best friend (Keizer et al., 2019). One salve for this paucity of emotional connection between adolescent boys is group or team activities.

However, is the mere act of grouping boys together for an activity enough to spark authentic connections? As educators, we put boys in teams in myriad contexts. Sport is perhaps the most common space where boys are in teams, although cultural extracurriculars—such as performance, service, or advocacy activities—also involve the creation of teams. Educators may intrinsically believe that teamwork is beneficial, yet the mere act of grouping boys together in teams does not inherently foster teamwork or social connections. There is an urgent need for more investment in teaching boys *how* to practically collaborate as a team. Moreover, if teamwork skills can be taught, perhaps boys can also be taught social connectedness.

After coaching debating for several years, I presumed that my squad would osmotically and organically learn how to work cohesively as a team by simply doing it week after week. I thought that all it took to become a successful team was practice. Yet during the regional debate competition, the boys in my debate squad consistently received feedback from adjudicators that, whilst their individual speeches were strong, their overall team argument lacked cohesion.

A peculiarity of the boys' debate division is that when the topic is announced, teams have one hour in a room with only their teammates to prepare their case before presenting it. I was not

privity to what the boys did during this hour of preparation and, as the season continued, I became curious as to whether they were indeed collaborating behind closed doors, as I presumed.

The initial goal of my research was to deconstruct what was happening during that unsupervised hour of debate preparation. For my action, I chose to focus on equipping the boys with practical skills that they could implement during that preparation time, when they only had their teammates to rely on. I investigated whether the explicit delivery of teamwork drills, particularly drills that taught the boys how to collaborate, impacted how they reflected on being part of a team. Team activities have the potential to encourage toxic masculinity in boys, so I attempted to promote positive masculinity traits instead. In particular, I explored whether my intervention helped them focus more on the team as a unit than themselves as individuals; that is, to practice selflessness instead of selfishness. I also explored whether my action helped the boys to form bonds that, in turn, helped them work more cohesively as a team—to practice social connectedness instead of self-reliance. My research question was: *How can co-creating a strategy for preparation time foster social connectedness in a debating squad of Year 10 and 11 boys?*

As I implemented the action, I simultaneously reflected on my role as an educator who has the power to facilitate teamwork for the boys. If teamwork does not organically happen, perhaps educators can—and should—have the impetus to intervene. Action research was an ideal methodology for this project, as it encourages the investigation of very specific “problems of practice” (Mertler, 2021, p. 2) that are unique to a particular educator and their students. The debate squad I worked with exhibited the specific problem of lacking cohesion, and action research allowed me to use my experiential knowledge as a coach to delve deeper into this issue. Additionally, action research is both collaborative and participatory (Mertler, 2021), meaning that the boys in this study were encouraged to play an active role in co-creating a strategy to best use their debate preparation time.

Critical reflection is simultaneously the final stage of action research and the genesis of another cycle of action research. I plan to coach debating for the foreseeable future, and the cyclical nature of action research felt like an investment in my future professional practice.

Literature Review

Adolescence is a developmental period where friendships become increasingly important sites for boys to navigate their expression of masculinity. Indeed, friendships provide boys with the social connectedness requisite for expressing positive masculinity. Scholars have found this to be the case for decades: in 1998, Niobe Way noted that boys tend to abandon their close friendships when they enter high school due to both internalized homophobia (not wanting to appear “gay”) and society’s “ambivalent messages regarding close male friendships” (p. 139). Way has continued to voice increasingly alarming trends about boys’ lack of friendship and social connection for more than two decades now (Way, 2011, 2013, 2024).

As boys progress further into adolescence, they grow more emotionally distant from their peers and abandon their “connection-oriented language” (Nielson et al., 2022, p. 3). Friendships between boys tend to be superficial and lack the support, disclosure, and intimacy that friendships between girls typically have (Schwartz-Mette et al., 2020). The consequences of these trends are distressing: boys who have lower friendship satisfaction during adolescence tend to suppress their emotions and exhibit behaviors consistent with depression and anxiety (Chervonsky & Hunt, 2019). Without friendships, boys are socially unmoored and at risk of developing poor mental health.

Way (2013) argues that boys need to be taught greater relational literacy to counter the damaging cultural discourse that male friendships are unimportant. In a similar vein, Kiselica (2016) argues that positive masculinity—which, at its core, is centered on positive social connections with peers—is something that can, and should be, taught to boys today. Boys’ schools offer a unique place, therefore, where both relational literacy and positive masculinity can be

taught. In particular, extracurricular activities beyond the classroom, where the constraints of curriculum and assessment are removed, provide a space to explicitly teach these skills.

Participation in team-based extracurricular activities, such as sport, can alleviate boys' feelings of loneliness and social isolation (Poulsen et al., 2007). Being part of a team can also provide boys with a context in which friendships with other boys can be established. This aligns with a core tenet of positive masculinity: the development of strong interpersonal relationships. Wilson et al. (2022) propose that boys who perform positive masculinity are socially connected to others, motivated to engage effectively with society, and authentic in their expression of their own identity.

Whilst educators understand the plethora of benefits gained from working in a team, can boys see the benefit of collaborating with others in a team dynamic? In a classroom context, boys in New Zealand have stated that they prefer to work as a team when problem solving and agreed that teamwork increases their own efficiency when completing a task (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2017). However, researchers agree that, when compared to girls, boys are significantly worse at demonstrating collaboration skills in practice (OECD, 2017; Strom & Strom, 2011). Boys enjoy working in teams, but they seem to lack the ability to do so effectively on their own.

Dr. Michael Thompson, a leading child psychologist specializing in adolescent boys, argues that "boys are raised to compete when, naturally, they want to play" (personal communication, March 6, 2024). When boys are placed in teams, their desire to compete tends to overshadow their ability to collaborate. A dual fear of co-dependency and of being perceived as lacking self-sufficiency is what drives boys to compete aggressively with their peers (Thompson, personal communication, March 6, 2024). The challenge for educators of boys, therefore, is to equip boys with the skills necessary to collaborate meaningfully in a team context and offset or assuage the desire to compete *against* teammates.

When boys are part of a team that collaborates effectively, they stand to reap myriad benefits of teamwork. In a team, boys are encouraged to share their feelings, bond with other boys, and build community (Hearn et al., 2020). Participation in extracurricular activities enhances civic engagement; in particular, boys who participate in teams that have a long-term arc, such as a season, are able to develop skills necessary to interact with both positive and negative contributors to the team's dynamic (Levine, 2016).

Educators and facilitators of extracurricular activities must provide boys with the space to laugh, to have fun, and to experience "shared adventure" (Thompson, personal communication, March 6, 2024). Boys use humor when developing relationships with other boys (Vereen et al., 2013). A sense of adventure, coupled with moments of levity and humor, are key components of friendship between boys. On a broader scale, Way (2013) proposes that society must simply value male friendships more. If educators of boys value friendships highly and invest time and resources into facilitating friendships for boys, the dividends for boys and their communities will be plentiful.

Research Context

Westlake Boys High School is a public day school on Auckland's North Shore that educates approximately 2,700 students in Years 9 to 13. Debating has been a popular extracurricular activity at Westlake for decades, with the 2023 Debating Society comprising 86 boys across all year levels. The participants in my research were the Premier Junior debating teams. This squad of 12 boys was made up of three teams, each with four members aged between 14 and 16 years old. I began coaching the squad of boys who participated in my project in February 2023, after the three teams had already competed in a regional inter-school competition of 35 teams. All participants and their caregivers received a letter explaining my research project, and participants were informed that they could withdraw at any time. Anonymity was guaranteed for all participants. All 12 boys in the debating squad gave their consent.

The Action

The action took place during the debate off-season (seven weeks from August to September) after the regional debate competition had ended. The boys attended training sessions after school for an hour each week. In the first training session, the boys completed a baseline survey about their perceptions of what it means to work as a team and whether they considered themselves to be team players in both a debating and non-debating context. Two boys were absent from this session and did not complete the survey. Additionally, I introduced the group to the concept of the “Man Box” (The Men’s Project & Flood, 2018). After discussing this concept, I facilitated the creation of a “Team Box” (see Appendix A), wherein the boys listed all the behaviors that good team players would and would not display.

The next two sessions were focused on skill development, where I facilitated two key drills. The first drill was an active listening exercise in which the boys were paired and provided with a debate topic. They took it in turns to spend two minutes sharing their initial ideas. Whilst one partner spoke, the other took notes and listened actively whilst not speaking himself. The second drill was a scripted task focusing on responding respectfully. This task began with a whole-group co-creation of phrases they could use to agree and disagree with teammates respectfully (see Appendix B).

Following this exercise, I randomly assigned boys to play various roles in a group of three (“idea generator,” “agreer,” or “disagreer”) and gave each group a debate topic. In the first minute-long round, the idea generator verbally brainstormed ideas to affirm the topic whilst the agreer roleplayed respectfully agreeing using the phrases that we had co-created. In the second round, the idea generator verbally brainstormed ideas to negate the topic whilst the disagreeer roleplayed respectfully disagreeing using the co-created phrases.

The fourth session centered on co-creating a strategy that could be used during the one-hour preparation time that the boys receive before each debate in the regional competition. I gave

each boy a pack with ten possible actions they might do during this preparation time printed on separate pieces of paper (see Appendix C). Firstly, the boys individually ordered the ten actions chronologically without conferring with their peers. Then, in their debate teams of four (see Figure 1), I asked them to come to a unanimous agreement on how to order the ten actions. Importantly, I made it clear that there was no one correct answer: the actions that I created could have been ordered in a variety of ways.

Figure 1

Photograph of Boys in Their Teams Ordering the Ten Actions to Take During the One-Hour Preparation Time



After this, the whole group of 12 joined together and completed the same task (see Figure 2). Again, the task was only complete after a unanimous decision was reached (see Appendix D). Interestingly, the boys did not ask to add any actions to the assortment that I had created.

Figure 2

Boys Working Together as a Squad of 12 to Establish a Unanimously Agreed Order of Ten Actions to Take During the One-Hour Preparation Time



During the penultimate session, the boys put their chronological list of preparation actions into practice in a series of short impromptu debates. Then in the final session, the boys participated in a survey that contained some of the same questions they were asked in the first session. I asked them to reflect on their perception of teamwork. Additionally, I asked them structured questions about whether they perceived a change in either their empathy or collaboration skills as a result of the off-season training.

Data Collection

When there are multiple methods and sources of data collection, the validity of the findings is enhanced (Mertler, 2019). Whilst most of the data that I collected were qualitative, I also collected some quantitative data. My qualitative data collection methods included open-ended questions in surveys at the beginning of my action and again at the end of the intervention period. Additionally, I collected quantitative data in the form of Likert scale responses wherein the boys indicated the extent to which they agreed with statements about teamwork. The surveys were used

to provide an authentic student voice and were facilitated digitally so that the boys' answers were private.

During the skill development sessions, I observed the boys and took field notes about behaviors I noticed. Additionally, I made audio recordings of some randomly selected groups whilst they were participating in the drills during these sessions. It was important to compare my notes as a researcher with the comments made by the boys themselves. In doing so, I was able to triangulate the data collected throughout the research period.

Action research focuses specifically on the unique characteristics of the population with whom the action is taken (Mertler, 2019). The debate group with whom I worked comprised only 12 students. Due to this small sample size and the holistic and contextualized nature of action research, the results cannot be generalized to a wider population of teenage boys; however, the data gained were trustworthy and useful for me and the students on my Debating Squads.

Data Analysis

To analyze my qualitative data, I used an inductive reasoning approach to code the boys' responses thematically. After the initial coding process, I compared the prevalence of specific themes in the boys' responses at both the beginning and the end of the action.

To supplement this qualitative data, I also analyzed the quantitative Likert scale responses from surveys at the beginning and end of the action. Additionally, I listened to audio recordings of the drill sessions with an open mind to see if any patterns could be identified. Unexpectedly, I noticed a lot of laughter from the boys. I therefore created a quantitative record of how frequently the boys laughed during drills, as I had a hunch that their laughter might correlate with the thematic comments about "fun" that the boys had expressed in the surveys. Lastly, I read through my field notes from the drill sessions to assess whether my observations correlated with what the boys self-reported in the surveys.

Discussion of Results

The principal aim of my action was to equip the debate squad with a successful strategy to implement in the preparation time before a debate. A secondary aim was to foster communication and collaboration skills—key elements of both teamwork and positive masculinity—amongst the squad. My hope was to notice an improvement in the way that the boys listened to each other, shared their ideas, and responded to the opinions of their peers.

When surveyed at the end of my action, most of the boys did not report any significant changes in their perceived ability to collaborate. Despite my initial disappointment, and after analyzing the data with a more open mind, I found that the boys self-reported the development of something deeper than mere collaboration: friendship. The boys identified the development of closer bonds that transcended the context of preparing for a debate as a team.

The three main themes that the data pointed to were: team activities provide boys with an opportunity to develop friendships and greater social connectedness; being a “team player” means demonstrating empathic behaviors that are intentionally taught; and working as a team is centered on feeling comfortable enough to be vulnerable.

Team Activities Develop Friendships

The group activity of debate provided the boys with a context in which they could develop bonds with their peers, thus helping the boys to feel greater social connectedness.

An unexpected finding from this research was the emergence of authentic friendships between the boys on the debate squad. In the final survey, I asked the boys to name an aspect of teamwork that they thought they had improved over the course of the action. I had expected the boys to comment on a particular skill relevant to debating, such as “listening,” but hardly any of the boys focused on debate-related skills. Instead, their perceived improvement was the cultivation of friendships: seven of the 12 boys referenced “bonding” or “friendship” in their answers. One boy noted how he felt “more connected and in tune” with his teammates, whilst another boy remarked

on “getting closer to [his] teammates.” To view the development of social bonds as an “improvement” suggests that the boys valued these friendships and viewed them positively.

One boy indicated that collaboration in his team had increased “because we are forced to rely on and trust each other.” Trusting and relying on peers is an important aspect of social connection. This social connection is necessary not merely for collaboration in a team context but also for the cultivation of friendship in a broader sense. Social connectedness is a core element of positive masculinity (Wilson et al., 2022) and team activities provide boys with a meaningful context in which to form connections with peers. Being part of a team means that boys feel secure and able to foster healthy masculine identities.

Intentional Teaching Develops Empathy

So, how was social connectedness cultivated over the course of my action? The answer: through the deliberate teaching of empathic behaviors to the boys.

In the initial survey at the start of my action, only four of the 12 boys referenced some sort of empathic behavior as necessary to being a “team player.” The boys mostly used negative framing when expressing these behaviors. One boy stated that being a team player means “not trying to dominate your teammates” whilst another said it means “not lowering morale.” Whilst they clearly demonstrated some ability to think of others’ needs, the negative framing suggests that they were familiar only with what “not” to do.

The drill sessions completed throughout my action were each focused on a specific skill necessary for teamwork, such as active listening and respectful disagreeing. After completing these sessions, the boys took a final survey in which they were again asked about what constitutes a team player. Mentions of empathic behavior in the context of teamwork increased to eight of the 12 boys. A noticeable difference was the positive framing of their responses. The boys were now able to articulate specific examples of how to demonstrate empathic behavior to their teammates. One boy said that being a team player means “provid[ing] helpful contributions while simultaneously

accepting other contributions,” whilst another said it means “congratulating teammates for a good speech.” The targeted specificity of these actions greatly contrasted to the more generalized and negatively framed comments that were elicited in the first session. These data indicate that the act of deliberately teaching specific aspects of teamwork equipped the boys with a positive toolkit of empathic behaviors they could implement in team contexts.

In the final session, the boys were asked whether participating in the debate squad had helped them personally develop greater empathy. Seven out of 12 said “yes,” whilst two said “no,” and a further two were “unsure.” Most boys could see a link between the drill sessions and the development of their own sense of empathy. Although four boys did not report any increase in empathy, the increase in their comments on empathic behaviors being necessary for “team players” indicates that they were actually thinking of others in an empathic manner. Indeed, Boy X said that being a team player means “helping others on their speech if they need help” but was “unsure” as to whether participating in debate had helped him to develop a greater sense of empathy. Even though he did not self-identify a greater sense of empathy, he was nonetheless displaying empathic behavior.

Being Comfortable Enables Being Vulnerable

Whilst the explicit teaching of empathic behaviors is important, boys must also feel comfortable enough to display these behaviors to their peers. What condition might encourage this? The answer: building an element of fun into teamwork sessions.

In the first session, only one of the 12 boys mentioned “fun” when asked to describe what “working as a team” means in a debating context. In the final session, this increased to four of the 12 boys. One boy said that working as a team means “where you all cooperate and have fun while doing it,” whilst another simply said that teamwork equates to “good times.” After several weeks of teamwork drills, four boys indicated that teamwork was synonymous with having fun.

In an audio recording of a drill that involved roleplaying obstinate teammates, there was a higher proportion of laughter than I had observed in any other drill. In 270 seconds of audio recording, there were 16 instances of laughter. This is an approximate rate of one instance of laughter per 17 seconds. My field notes from this session state: *“This was probably the most ridiculous and exaggerated drill that we have done so far during the skill development sessions.... This was a drill that the boys did not take seriously.... They said some silly things and the whole drill devolved into a bit of chaos.”*

Although initially dismissing this drill as a failure in terms of fostering collaboration, I realized that these moments of exaggerated roleplaying and jocular behavior allowed the boys to simply have fun. The boys’ laughter indicated that they enjoyed playing roles that were deliberately more exaggerated than how they would act in a real debate and they liked the performative nature of this drill. Although this space for “fun” within the drill session was unintentional, perhaps it was necessary. Laughter is indicative of trusting the people around you enough to exhibit an authentic, vulnerable emotion. Perhaps providing the boys with a space to laugh and joke allowed them to express a more vulnerable, authentic version of themselves. This may have influenced the boys’ willingness to express empathic behaviors towards each other, which in turn fostered the development of strong social bonds and the formation of friendships.

Whilst intentional teaching of teamwork skills is important, so too are moments of levity. Allowing boys to have fun is a key part of fostering teamwork in an activity outside the classroom. Indeed, these spaces also promote the development of healthy masculinities due to increased social connectedness. Strong relationships with peers means that activities with these peers are viewed by the boys as more enjoyable. In the words of one boy, teamwork is when “you and your friends have fun [and] enjoy your debating time.”

Conclusions

It is clear that the boys in my debate squad reflected positively on the teamwork drills that I implemented over the course of this action research project. By explicitly teaching collaboration skills necessary in a debate context—such as active listening and respectful disagreeing—the boys were able to hone their ability to demonstrate these skills. It was important that this teaching happened during the off-season after the regional competition had concluded. This removed the immediate context of competition, meaning that the boys could engage with the training sessions without any pressure to compete or win.

It is important to develop these skills in extra-curricular spaces, without the academic pressures associated with regular classes. That said, the principle of teaching boys how to work as a team could be transposed to a classroom context when group activities are embedded into teaching and learning. Group activities are often implemented during inquiry learning units, and perhaps there is room here to build in the explicit teaching of how to work collaboratively with peers.

By facilitating the co-creation of a strategy for their preparation time before a competitive debate, I was able to gain insight into this previously private experience that the boys shared. The open discussion of how to use this time most effectively encouraged the boys to think more collaboratively. This emphasis on collaboration in turn ultimately resulted in the boys identifying greater feelings of social connectedness with their teammates. Unexpectedly, the boys reported that they had developed friendships with their teammates. Whilst social connectedness may be limited to a specific context, friendship is a far greater concept that transcends the context of an extracurricular activity. It is heartening to know that, by participating in a debate team, the boys have developed friendships, particularly because such friendships are vital for the expression of healthy, positive masculinity.

In my role as Teacher in Charge of Debating, I plan to create a framework of drills that other debate coaches can implement with their teams in the future. These drills will be integrated into training sessions from the beginning of the competitive season. Additionally, I will encourage coaches to facilitate a “Team Box” brainstorming session with their boys to establish a shared definition of what it means to be a team player. It will be interesting to observe how this focus on collaboration within the context of the regular competitive season, where the boys are debating competitively against other schools each fortnight, will affect the boys’ performance.

During the next debate season, I plan to map not only the social connectedness of the teams but also their general efficacy: if boys are taught to collaborate more effectively with their teammates, will this translate to more victories when they compete against other teams? Or, to put it more simply, if boys compete alongside their *friends*, do they have a greater chance of winning?

Reflection Statement

This project was an incredibly rewarding undertaking. I was humbled to realize that I held the power to facilitate both fun and the formation of friendships amongst the boys I oversee. Around halfway through this project, I was on lunchtime duty in a part of the school I do not usually frequent. I looked over to see eight boys from my debate squad sitting together and laughing whilst eating their lunch. Upon approaching them, one boy said, “This is where we sit now, Miss.” It was at that moment that I realized this project was working. The boys were not faking it—they had become legitimate friends.

Figure 3

Photograph of the Debating Squad and Me at the Conclusion of our Final Training Session



My findings in this project empowered me, as I became aware of the crucial role I could play in helping the boys to connect with peers and develop strong bonds. Although leading extracurricular activities is a sacrifice of personal time, I hope to empower my colleagues by revealing the central role that we can play in the lives of the boys with whom we work. I realized that I was not simply teaching the boys how to debate. Rather, I was teaching them relational literacy skills. In doing so, I was also creating a space where they could connect with others. I am unsure whether their friendships would have developed organically if it were not for this project.

I often say that being a debate coach means that I have the best job in the school, as it allows me to work with some of the brightest and most entertaining boys here. My debate squad was a delight to work with, and I would like to thank them for dedicating their Wednesday afternoons to this project, even when the competitive season was over and they very easily could have joined another club or activity.

Thank you to the International Boys' School Coalition for providing me with this opportunity to challenge myself professionally. Thank you to my advisor, Kori Brown, for your unwavering support and enthusiasm. Thank you for all of the Zoom hours that you invested into this project, even when the 18-hour time difference was difficult to navigate. Thank you to my fellow team members for all of your morale-boosting messages in our WhatsApp chat. Like the boys in this project, I now consider you all my friends.

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Appendix A

Co-Created "Team Box"

<u>Inside the "Team Box"</u> <i>Stereotypical behaviors of a teammate who puts himself ahead of the team</i>	<u>Outside of the "Team Box"</u> <i>Behaviors of a teammate who puts the team ahead of himself</i>
Gives feedback meant to hurt, not to improve	Listens to others
Arrogant	Bringing out the best in others
Makes it a bad environment	Good at communication
Feedback that is not constructive	An ability to help others expand on ideas
Dominating	Not afraid to give or take critique
They try to do everything themselves	Full effort right until the end
Bad at explaining	An ability to look through another person's perspective
They don't contribute	Humble
They don't listen	Politely disagrees
They do stuff to benefit themselves that ultimately hurts the team	Helps everyone
Unrealistic expectations of team members	Acknowledges other people's ideas
Dismissive of a teammate's ideas	Has a knowledge of their teammate's strengths
Distracted and not paying attention	A person who makes it enjoyable
Someone who excludes based on race or other characteristics	Someone who doesn't own their own ideas in a territorial way
Someone who excludes themselves from the team	Not selfish
	Someone who knows when to be quiet

Appendix B

Co-Created List of Phrases for Agreeing and for Disagreeing with Teammates

List of phrases we can use when we are **agreeing** with somebody's idea during preparation:

- Good idea
- Let's go with this idea
- Would you like to expand on that?
- I want to build on that idea
- Who would like to use this idea in the debate?
- Why does this matter?
- How can we mechanize this?
- How does it impact the stakeholders?
- What are the micro and macro impacts of this point?

List of phrases we can use when we are **disagreeing** with somebody's idea during preparation:

- Oh yeah, maybe, but...
- This is a good point but it can be easily countered by the other team
- That is not the best idea because...
- Can you expand on that idea?
- We can put that idea into the 'maybe' pile
- Respectfully, I disagree because...
- We already have something for this - it may be too late to mention this
- This is a good point but there are better points to talk about
- This does not involve the stakeholders

Appendix C

Researcher-Created List of Actions to Take During the One-Hour Preparation Time

- Defining key terms of the motion
- Sharing initial ideas one by one
- Group brainstorm
- Characterization of the key stakeholders
- Silent individual brainstorm
- Ordering of key points
- Brainstorming what the other team might say
- Deciding why our case matters
- Brainstorming points of information
- Structuring and expanding on substantive arguments

Appendix D

Student-Ordered List of Actions to Take During Preparation Time, as Unanimously Agreed Upon by the Full Squad

1. Silent individual brainstorm
2. Sharing our initial ideas one by one
3. Defining key terms of the motion
4. Group brainstorm
5. Deciding why our case matters
6. Characterization of key stakeholders
7. Brainstorming what the other team might say
8. Structuring and expanding on substantive arguments
9. Ordering of key points
10. Brainstorming points of information