

## Oral Argument Skills

<p><b>Persuasive Emphasis of Important Issues; using reason, motivating arguments, policy and logic</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Counsel persuasively emphasizes the issues important to his/her case.</li> <li>• Uses reason, policy, logic and motivating arguments in support of position, rather than relying solely on precedents.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Incorporating Relevant Questions into Overall Analysis</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Throughout the argument, counsel incorporates and weaves relevant questions into overall analysis.</li> <li>• Uses questions to make points persuasive to his/her side of issue.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Responsiveness to Questions; using authority to answer questions</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Counsel answers questions directly the first time and does not evade difficult questions.</li> <li>• Counsel is able to answer questions with authority, either by direct reference to authorities, or by implication (e.g. The Eleventh Circuit's logic suggests...).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Clarity and Directness of Arguments; Addressing Weak Points</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Throughout the argument, counsel develops arguments to a level of clarity that is easy to understand, and addresses the issue as directly and succinctly as possible.</li> <li>• Counsel understands weak points of argument and addresses weak points persuasively.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Knowledge of Record or Decision, Understanding and Use of the Facts</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Throughout the argument, counsel shows thorough knowledge of the record and the facts in the case.</li> <li>• Counsel can explain the details and subtleties of the lower court's decision.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Speaking Ability</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Throughout the argument, counsel uses correct grammar and talks in complete, audible sentences.</li> <li>• Counsel's voice is loud (but not overbearing).</li> <li>• Counsel varies pitch and tone and uses a conversational approach.</li> <li>• Counsel makes no distracting sounds.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Courtroom Demeanor</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Throughout the argument, counsel maintains good eye contact and has an obvious knowledge of his/her argument without notes.</li> <li>• Counsel has no distracting mannerisms.</li> <li>• Counsel is courteous and professional.</li> </ul>

Oral Argument Feedback					
Opening	Excellent 5	Good 4	Average 3	Fair 2	Poor 1
Begins with prepared opening					
Begins with good eye contact					
Begins with appropriate factual context					
Identifies disputed issues before moving into argument					
Argument & Conclusion	Excellent 5	Good 4	Average 3	Fair 2	Poor 1
Argument is conversational not scripted					
Argument demonstrates sound knowledge of cases					
Argument demonstrates sound knowledge of facts					
Advocate stops speaking when judge speaks					
Questions are regarded with anticipation not fear or annoyance					
Advocate listens carefully to questions and pauses if needed					
Questions answered clearly and directly, no evasion, refers to authority					
Advocate makes reasonable points.					
Advocate returns to argument after answering questions					
Argument ends with strong conclusion					
Presentation	Excellent	Good	Average	Fair	Poor
Dress and appearance are conservative and professional					
Keeps eye contact throughout argument					
Avoids using distracting mannerisms					
Voice is clear and firm; pace is measured					
Keeps respectful demeanor and is prepared					
<b>Totals</b>					