



ORAL ADVOCACY & COURTROOM MANNERISMS

A Comprehensive Guide to Master Bench Presentation, Case Framing, and
Professional Etiquette in Moot Court Advocacy

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The Moot Court Society • Centre for Juridical Science and Policy Research



WORKSHOP MODULES

01. Introduction & Entry

Mindset transition from law student to professional counsel.

02. Addressing the Bench

Formal protocols, 3rd person references, seeking leave.

03. Case Presentation

Establishing jurisdiction, concise facts, and issue layout.

04. Arguments & Precedents

Structuring legal arguments, citation flow, pleading ignorance.

05. Reading the Prayer

Formal conclusion, requesting relief, time management.

06. Answering Judicial Questions

Responsive dialog, key phrases, handling interjections.

DEMEANOR & COURTROOM ENTRY



EMBODY THE ROLE OF COUNSEL

The moment you step across the courtroom threshold, your persona transforms. You are no longer merely a law student taking part in an exercise—you are an officer of the court representing your client.



Initial Presence: Enter the courtroom with a composure that is confident, calm, and accompanied by a courteous, subtle smile.



Walk Confidently: Walk with clear purpose and composure toward the podium or counsel table.



Mindset Shift: Stand as an advocate duty-bound to assist the bench with authority and utmost respect.





PROTOCOLS FOR ADDRESSING THE BENCH



3RD PERSON & FORMAL LEAVE

Refer to Yourself in Third Person: Always maintain formal distance by referring to yourself as "*The Counsel*" rather than "I" or "we".

Seek Leave to Approach:

"The Counsel seeks permission to approach the bench."

Express Appreciation:

"Much obliged, Your Lordship / Your Ladyship."

BENCH ADDRESS & INTRODUCTION

Collective Address: Request permission to address multiple judges as a collective bench:

"The Counsel seeks permission to collectively refer to the bench as Your Lordships / Your Ladyships."

Formal Introduction Script:

"May it please the court, this is the Counsel for the [Petitioner/Respondent], in the case [Name]. The code allotted to Counsel is [X]."

STRUCTURING THE CASE OPENING



1. JURISDICTION

Establish why you have approached this court specifically and not another forum.

"If Your Lordships are satisfied with the Statement of Jurisdiction, Counsel seeks permission to address the facts."



2. STATEMENT OF FACTS

Provide a concise factual summary unless the bench indicates prior familiarity.

"If the Court is already well-versed with the facts, Counsel seeks permission to state the issues."



3. ISSUE ROADMAP

Outline the primary issues clearly and indicate affirmative/negative positions.

"There are three major issues... In Issue 1, Counsel will argue the affirmative covering three sub-questions..."

ARGUMENTS ADVANCED

SUBSTANTIVE ARGUMENT DELIVERY

Substantiate Every Claim: Any argument or assertion must be anchored in either facts from the proposition or statutory provisions and binding judicial precedents.

Maintain Argument Flow: Seamlessly transition between points using professional transitional phrasing such as "*The Counsel humbly submits...*"

Judicial Precedent Mastery: Only cite judgments whose factual matrices you are thoroughly familiar with. Pleading ignorance on cited cases undermines credibility.



ANSWERING JUDICIAL QUESTIONS



Interjections are an opportunity to engage the bench. Use these essential phrases to maintain polish and control during questioning:



Submitting Points: *"The Counsel humbly submits that..."* — Use when introducing a core legal interpretation or response.



Respectful Disagreement: *"The Counsel respectfully would like to disagree..."* — Politely counter a judge's premise without being adversarial.



Elaborating Position: *"The Counsel would like to respectfully add..."* — Supplement an answer with statutory or case law support.



Conceding Gracefully: *"The Counsel humbly concedes this point and submits to the decision of the court in this matter."*



Requesting Clarification: *"Your Lordship, if you could kindly rephrase or repeat the question."*

⌚ TIME & JUDICIAL PROTOCOL RULES



0%

EXTRA TIME FOR Q&A

Judicial questioning eats into your allotted speaker time. Plan pacing accordingly.

GOLDEN RULES UNDER TIME PRESSURE

⌚ Never Speak Over a Judge:

Stop talking immediately the exact second a judge begins speaking.

✓ Direct "Yes" or "No" First:

Always answer directly before elaborating: "Yes, Your Honor, in fact..." or "No, Your Honor, rather..."

⌚ Courtmaster Tracking:

Keep visual tabs on the timekeeper and seamlessly transition to prayer before time lapses.

STRATEGIC PREPARATION METHODS



STRUCTURED FLOW NOTES

Prepare modular notes for each issue.
Record exact page and paragraph references for facts and precedents to access instantly.



ANTICIPATED Q&A BANK

Review each heading critically to list potential bench queries. Draft point-wise answers with citations ready before stepping up.



CONVERSATION VS. SPEECH

Treat oral advocacy as an interactive dialogue with the bench. Avoid reading verbatim scripts; engage judges directly.

GENERAL DO'S AND DON'TS



CATEGORY	 (RECOMMENDED PRACTICE)	 (STRICTLY PROHIBITED)
Dress Code	Black coat & crisp white shirt / white kurti; neat professional attire.	Casual wear, missing coats, or unbuttoned collars.
Judicial Exchange	Pause, listen patiently, and begin responses with "Yes" or "No".	Interrupting or talking over a judge when they speak.
Notes & Papers	Keep precise, tabbed, clean notes for quick navigation.	Shuffling clutter of papers or lost page turning.
Handling Gaps	Plead ignorance gracefully on unstudied exterior law.	Plead ignorance on facts or memorial cited cases.

“ APPROACH YOUR ORAL ARGUMENT AS AN ENGAGING CONVERSATION WITH THE JUDGES. RESPOND, ADAPT, AND INFORM — NEVER MERELY READ A PREPARED SPEECH.

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QUESTIONS & DISCUSSION

"Wherefore in the light of the facts stated and arguments advanced, May it
Please the Court..."

*Remember: Always seek formal permission to read the Prayer when concluding
your arguments or when time expires.*



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Compendium Structure & Components

A systematically indexed dossier of primary legal sources compiled for bench reference during oral rounds.



Cover & Table of Contents

Establishes formal identity and ensures rapid navigation for judges.

- › Team Code & Party Designation
- › Detailed Page-Indexed Contents
- › Statement of Jurisdiction Reference



Statutory Provisions

Compiles all legislative laws and rules cited within the Memorial.

- › Relevant Bare Act Excerpts
- › Constitutional Articles
- › Treaties & Regulations



Judicial Precedents

Full judgments or exact extracts supporting key arguments.

- › Landmark & Binding Case Laws
- › Highlighted Ratio Decidendi
- › Mapped to Memorial Issues



Preparation & Formatting Steps

Key execution steps to curate, format, and present a judge-ready legal compendium.

01

Curation

Select only primary precedent cases and statutory sections directly cited in the Memorial.

02

Highlighting

Highlight relevant paragraphs and apply color-coded sticky tabs for real-time oral reference.

03

Compliance

Adhere to rulebook font, margins, side colors (Blue/Red), and strict anonymity guidelines.

04

Bench Copies

Bind multiple clean copies for the bench and keep a synchronized master copy with the researcher.



Pro-Tip for Oral Advocacy: Prepare page references in the Compendium under your assigned cases. When you're briefing and going to the Compendium Page Number table, you'll find the page numbers.

Thank You!

We appreciate your time and attention. We are now open for questions and further discussion.



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