

WINNING A CIVIL LIBERTIES ARGUMENT

LiQAR Model:

1. Listen
2. Question
3. Assess
4. Respond

1. Listen

- a. You have to do this in order to understand the argument you are engaged in
- b. Focus on the issues and concerns the other person is expressing
- c. Be able to paraphrase the other person's main points

2. Question

- a. Ask one or more questions—make them questions, not arguments
- b. This helps you understand the true nature of the other person's argument so you can frame your response appropriately
- c. Help you and the other person clarify his/her own position
- d. Also helps set a tone of dialogue rather than debate

3. Assess

- a. Is it really about the issue itself or is it about some larger concern?
 - Is it really about the ACLU and/or political ideology?
 - Is it a "moral" argument or a Constitutional argument?

4. Respond

- a. If it is really about the issue itself, respond with the steps for advocating
- b. If it is really about the ACLU/ideology, respond with statements about who will challenge the encroachment on our civil liberties if the ACLU doesn't do it. Ask the person if they would accept such encroachment on themselves or a member of their family. Describe what it could be like if we allowed civil liberties to be undermined.
- c. If it is a "moral" argument—
 - Some can't be argued, the person has a definite belief that won't be changed
 - Try first the Constitutional argument and pose the question of how to uphold the Constitution and respect the rights of all of us.
 - Second try discussing what is "right" or "fair". E.g., what is right or fair about making all students in a school listen to a morning prayer when they follow a different religion or no religion?