5 Keys To Succeeding on CELPIP Speaking Task 7:

Expressing Opinions

Here are 5 keys to doing well on this task:

1. **Make Sure To Use Honesty and Creativity**: Express your real opinion about the question you are being asked to respond to if at all possible. If you can't speak about the topic from personal experience, use your imagination to help you! Pretend that the situation is actually true, or that you've experienced it to help you with your answer.
2. **Time Management**: This point is vital for every task on the CELPIP exam - you need to be aware of each question's time constraints. On Speaking Task 7, you will have 30 seconds to read the question and brainstorm. This is followed by a 90-second recording phase to deliver your response. Use your brainstorming time well - this will help you give a stronger answer in the recording phase. (Remember: 90 seconds is a long time! Brainstorming will help you figure out what you'll say to fill out that time correctly.)
3. **Stay on Topic**: It is essential to make sure you fully understand the question. Pay attention to how many questions there are for you to respond to. Is it just one? Or are there other topics 'nesting' inside the big question that you also need to speak about? Be very careful to stay on topic as you develop and give your reply. (Don't go off on 'bunny trails' which means, don't go off topic!)
4. **Structured Argument**: Quickly decide if you will respond with a yes or no answer to the question. Then develop at least three reasons to support your opinion, using specific details or examples to reinforce each point. Using 3 reasons and 3 supporting reasons/details for each will help you to meet test raters' expectations for depth and elaboration.
5. **Use Transition Words**: Transition words help connect ideas and create a solid response. Here are a few example transition words that you might helpful for this task: "additionally," "therefore," and "for example." Sequencing ideas with phrases like "first," "second," "third," and "finally" is also important.

Question:

Do you think cities should ban private cars to reduce traffic and pollution?

A Possible Response:

"I believe cities should ban private cars to reduce traffic and pollution for several reasons. First, fewer cars on the road would lead to less air pollution because with fewer cars, there would be far less exhaust emissions as a result which would go a long way to improving public health. Limiting the number of cars on the streets and pollution in the air would also be great for our environment and may help to fight global warming. For example, in cities like London, car restrictions have been shown to significantly reduced emissions. Second, reducing traffic congestion makes commuting faster and more efficient. With less traffic, it will be far more easier for people to get where they need to go

because our cities would be forced to make drastic improvements in public transportation, which leads to my final point: Public transportation would become more widely used, promoting sustainable development. If there are less cars on the roads in our cities, there will be space and opportunity for better mass transit options which is better for everyone. In conclusion, banning private cars would greatly benefit both the environment and city life."

Why It's Effective:

1. **Clear Opinion**: You are taking a firm position from the start: "I believe cities should ban private cars."
   - **Why**: This directly answers the question, giving the examiner a clear sense of direction.
2. **Three Well-Developed Reasons**: Each reason is distinct and supported by details or examples:
   - "Fewer cars on the road would lead to less air pollution, improving public health."
     - **Why**: This is a specific, relevant point with a health-related focus.
   - "Reducing traffic congestion makes commuting faster and more efficient."
     - **Why**: This shows practical benefits, which strengthens the argument.
   - "Public transportation would become more widely used, promoting sustainable development."
     - **Why**: This shows long-term benefits for society which adds depth.
3. **Use of Transition Words**: Words like "first," "second," "lastly," and "in conclusion," are used which help organize ideas.
4. **Conclusion**: The response is wrapped up with a clear summary: "In conclusion, banning private cars would greatly benefit both the environment and city life."
   - **Why**: This reiterates the opinion and reinforces the main argument, creating a strong closing.

Now you give it a try:

Question: Do you think mass transit like busses and subways, should be promoted more in your city? (Remember to try and follow the 5 tips above as you develop your answer.)

Question two: Do you think we should still be using daylight saving time? (Setting our clocks an hour back in the Fall and an hour forward in the Spring?