

NHSMUN50

National High School Model United Nations



ADVANCED DELEGATE GUIDE

DELEGATE GUIDES



About IMUNA

Founded in 1979, IMUNA is an educational non-profit organization devoted to global issues education through simulation of international debate. To achieve this goal, we strive to build up the Model United Nations (MUN) community at all levels by leading premier MUN conferences, connecting students with the world of professional diplomacy, and creating resources that can put the power of MUN in every classroom.

Our flagship program, [NHSMUN](#), is the largest MUN conference for secondary school students in the world. Every year, we welcome more than 5,000 participants from more than 60 countries to the United Nations Headquarters in New York City for four days of lively debate and critical thinking. NHSMUN is run by a diverse, all-volunteer staff of more than 150 university students from the top colleges and universities. Our talented staff have gone on to become prominent diplomats, academics, business leaders, and lawyers who shape global politics today.

IMUNA's impact is not just limited to NHSMUN. To foster the growth of quality MUN experiences everywhere, we publish the resources that drive NHSMUN's success online, free of charge. We also partner with organizations in numerous countries, including China, Italy, Mexico, and the United Arab Emirates, to build high quality conferences in every region of the world. To support MUN in the classroom, we hold personalized training sessions for students and faculty to help them make the most of their MUN experience. We also partner with various UN agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to provide unique opportunities for students to experience first-hand the world of diplomacy and international relations.

What separates IMUNA from other MUN organizations is our belief that exceptional educational quality must be at the core of the MUN experience. Our staff prepares research materials for delegates that push them to develop critical thinking skills about complex global issues. For our faculty partners, we provide resources to expose students to new ways of thinking in clubs and classrooms around the world. At the conference, delegates learn from each other as they work to achieve consensus across diverse points of view. This passion for educational quality has earned IMUNA the reputation of being among the most academically rigorous conferences in the world.

IMUNA's goal is to shape next generation of globally-minded leaders through global issues education. Through MUN, we are able to prepare students for an increasingly interconnected future that will require cross-cultural understanding. If you are interested in working with us, please don't hesitate to contact us at info@imuna.org.

Overview

NHSMUN continues to attract some of the best MUN delegates from around the world, so it is our great pleasure to introduce our Advanced Delegate Guide. In the past, IMUNA's training materials have focused on beginner delegates who needed training in order to participate in NHSMUN at a high level. However, to recognize all that our advanced delegates do to make NHSMUN such a prestigious and recognized conference, we want to produce content that speaks to their needs as well.

This guide is intended for students and teachers who have *at least* one year of MUN experience and have attended at least 5 conferences. Many students will not be ready for the concepts in this guide until later in their MUN careers, so they should not be rushed into this content. This guide will assume that the reader knows the basics of MUN, such as the flow of debate and the components of a resolution. In terms of content, this guide is structured parallel to the natural process of preparing for and performing at a MUN conference. We begin with some advanced tips for experienced MUN researchers, go on to discuss how to create a compelling and bulletproof policy, and then discuss the speaking and negotiating strategies delegates should be using at conferences. Throughout the materials, we will make regular reference to concepts from the worlds of professional diplomacy, business, and education, which should all be considered avenues for further research. This guide does not aim to be exhaustive of all the techniques that effective delegates use but rather a primer to the kinds of techniques that delegates should be learning.

At the end of each section are example activities designed for advanced delegates. Many of these activities are written with teachers in mind but can also be used by student leaders as well. The activities are generally designed for teachers leading an after-school club, since that is by far the most common way students participate in MUN. For teachers fortunate to have a class dedicated to teaching MUN, these activities can easily be converted into lesson plans.

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If you have any questions about this guide, please feel free to contact IMUNA at info@imuna.org. We are always seeking to refine this guide based on the questions we receive!

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Research for MUN Veterans

There are two reasons this guide won't spend much time on research. First, while many adults believe that googling provides only basic information, Google searches are so much more powerful than they were even a few years ago. This means delegates don't need to know the old search engine tricks that people used to use. As Google becomes a better source for research, the need to use other sources decreases. The second reason is that research skills come with a lot of time and a lot of practice. Delegates will notice patterns across topics so that will allow them to be more informed when researching a new topic.

Therefore, this section will focus on two things: **what information delegates aren't looking for** and **where they're not looking for it**. Delegates can research very well without the tips in this section. However, following these suggestions will turn an okay researcher into a great researcher.

What to Look For

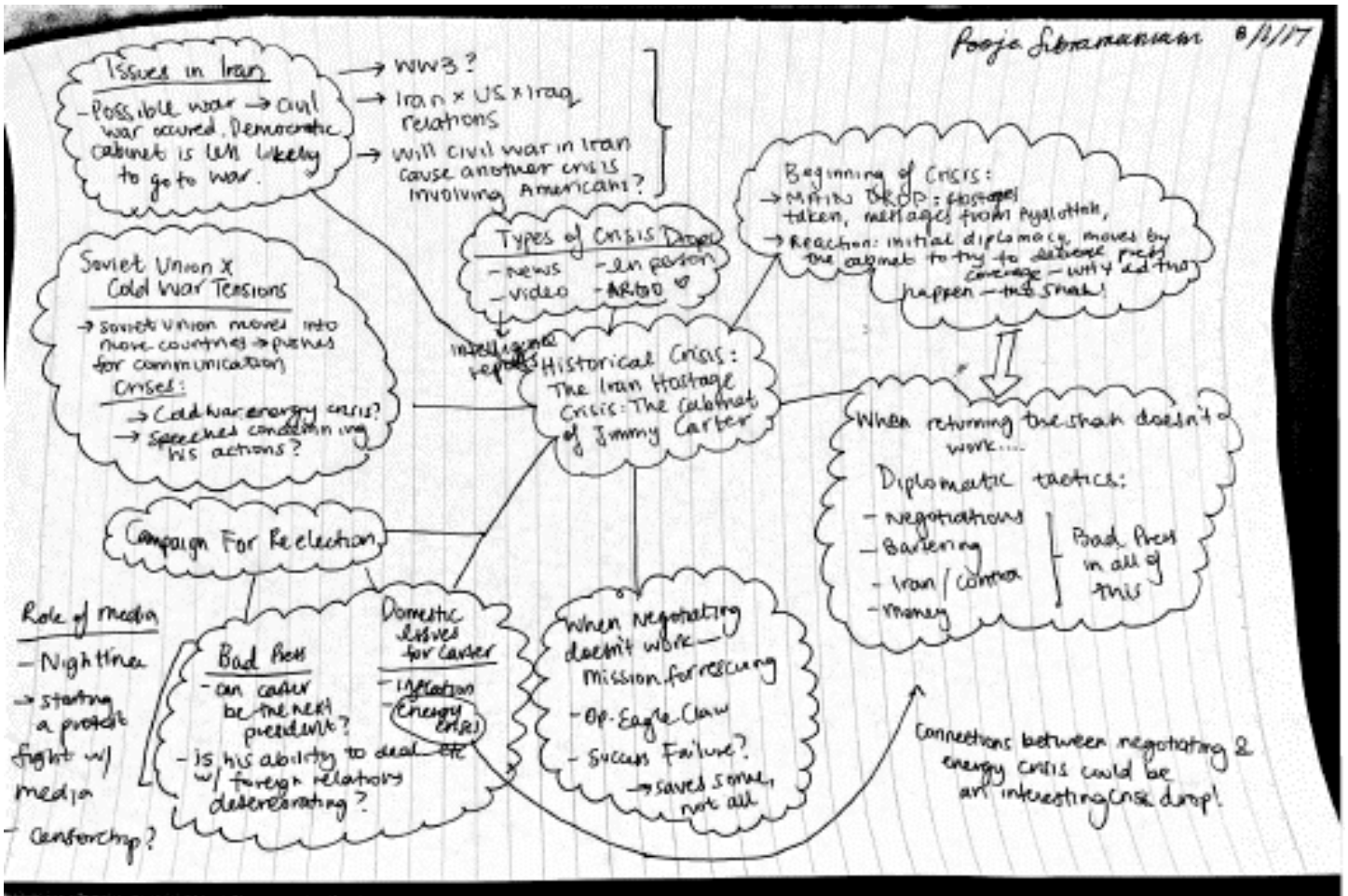
It's becoming clichéd to say that the world is a vast, interconnected place, but that is the mindset that delegates must take to researching their topics. Delegates too often get so focused in the specifics of their topic that they don't see the relationships with other topics and ideas. This can *severely* limit the delegate's knowledge of their country's policy and hamper creativity when it comes to solutions.

Let's look at an example to illustrate how delegates can expand their thinking. Somalia is a country that many delegates know to be the victim of numerous cycles of poverty, violence, and instability. These cycles are staple topic for security-related committees, as the conflicts in Somalia have been documented extensively and are therefore easier to research. However, when many delegates research the violence in Somalia, they focus on the regional warlords (both Somali and Ethiopian) and the Islamist group al-Shabaab. Reasonably experienced delegates are likely to build solid understandings of how these groups operate and how they extort civilians by keeping them in a state of fear. But often delegates don't ask *why* these groups exist the way they do. What sustains these groups? Why do young men whose families are terrorized by these groups eventually join them?

It won't surprise most MUNers to hear that the violence in Somalia has created vast number of refugees, many of whom flee to Kenya. In fact, the refugee camp in Dadaab, Kenya, is among the largest in the world. It should also surprise few to learn that the standard of living is very low in these camps. In fact, what is happening is that al-Shabaab is using these camps as recruiting grounds, luring young men living in abject poverty to radicalization with the promise of wealth and power. This creates a cycle between militant groups driving refugees to Kenya, then recruiting them back to become militants themselves in Somalia. **Therefore, no solution can claim to address the issue of militant violence in Somalia if it doesn't address the issue of poverty in Somali refugee camps and in Somalia itself.** Solving one without the other simply permits the cycle to continue. It may seem counter-intuitive to novice delegates to discuss poverty in a committee like DISEC, yet a comprehensive approach to these issues is necessary.

Usually, delegates are not able to simply intuit these complex dynamics. Instead, they come from diligent, open-minded research. **Debate maps** are a tool that IMUNA staff use during their topic research and during committee. They are a type of mind map that can help visualize the connections between various aspects of a topic and hint at new dimensions that may not have been considered yet. Below, we've outlined the process for creating a debate map and included an example from one of IMUNA's staff members.

1. Take a blank piece of paper and write the name or central idea of the topic in the center of the page. Draw a circle around it.



2. Think of the major subtopics that show up in Google, or even the subtopics that Wikipedia lists. These should be broad. Write each of these around the main circle and circle them as well. Draw lines between the central circle and each subtopic.
3. Further breakdown these subtopics into their own subtopics, and draw more spokes connecting them back to their parent idea.
4. As more ideas are written out, think about the connections *between* subtopics. In the example above, a debate map might have the subtopics terrorism and refugees, which have sub-subtopics of recruitment and poverty, respectively. Based on the dialogue above, one could draw a spoke between the two of them to show a relationship between poverty and terrorist recruitment.
5. Once the map is starting to look complete, look for areas where the map is sparser. Where are there the fewest connections? Is there an idea that could create a connection between those ideas? Continue to brainstorm what might exist there.

Once the debate map is complete, it should provide a wide range of key terms to search for in Google. Not every term will generate a lot of research, which is okay! Sometimes this is because the connection doesn't really exist, sometimes it's simply because there hasn't been a lot of research done on that yet. However, the ones that do generate lots of research will elevate a delegate's thinking well beyond the average.

Where to Look for It

Google will bring delegates to most high-quality resources eventually, but it's also useful for delegates to build their mental library of good sources so that they can find information more quickly. This section will focus on resources that should be accessed by delegates routinely so that they can spend less time on Google and more time thinking about their research.

First, a note on statistics. Many of the resources below will link students to research databases that are great for grabbing numbers. Many delegates equate statistics and numbers with better research. On its face, it seems only natural for debaters to look for a battery of hard data to support their arguments. However, debate is about convincing other humans to agree with or sympathize with a point of view, and humans are motivated by far more than just numbers. Delegates should always be sure to pair numbers with context. Hearing that as of 2013, 11% of the world's people were living in extreme poverty (less than USD 1.25 per day) isn't going to mean as much without the context of what living in extreme poverty looks and feels like.

- [UN PaperSmart](#): This was discussed in the Beginner Delegate Guide, but it bears repeating here. UN PaperSmart is the best way to access UN documents, especially those that aren't approved UN resolutions. UN PaperSmart is the authoritative archive of every research document, every draft resolution, every note from the Secretary-General, and much more. This is the platform that real UN diplomats access daily. The system has a bit of a learning curve, especially when it comes to finding meetings and conferences relevant to a specific topic. However, the time investment needed to learn the system is time well spent.
- [Dag Hammarskjöld Library](#): Named for the second Secretary-General of the UN, this library sits on the grounds of the UN Headquarters in New York, but its online component will be of more interest to delegates. It serves as a repository for UN documents and reports, so there is some overlap with the UN PaperSmart system. The library also seeks external publications related to the work of the UN or UN documents. Many of these are academic documents and can therefore be at a very high reading level. If delegates are willing to put in the time and effort required, the Library can provide valuable sources of information that the average delegate just won't have at their disposal.
- [World Bank](#): For topics that are at all related to global finance (and there are many!), the World Bank is a wonderful resource. In addition to being a key actor in global finance efforts, the World Bank also publishes numerous well-regarded reports about global development. Many of these reports don't even focus on finance! Because they affect the implementation of loans in developing countries, there are also reports on topics like corruption, public services, urbanization, and more. Some reports are written by academics and can be more difficult to read, but again, the valuable information is worth the extra work.
- [World Bank Open Data](#): While technically the same source, the power of this tool warrants its own entry. Open data is a searchable statistical database that quickly and easily displays key figures used to measure countries over time. While the CIA World Factbook provides snapshots of certain figures, the World Bank can show a figure for one or many countries on the same chart that can span decades. All of the data is also downloadable, too, for delegates who have the skills to analyze it. Delegates should check out the sheer number of [indicators](#) that can be searched if they aren't impressed already.
- **Global Think Tanks**: There are many great think tanks around the world whose role essentially amounts to bringing together some of the best minds in the world under one roof. Therefore, like the World Bank, these think tanks can be a great source for finding real reports used by professional diplomats and politicians. Some think tanks that are well known for their balanced perspectives include [The Brookings Institute](#), [The Carnegie Endowment for International](#)



[Peace](#), [The Council on Foreign Relations](#), and [The International Institute for Strategic Studies](#), among many others. However, sometimes these reports can show considerable author bias. In the hands of a great delegate, this bias can be a tool instead of a pitfall, but only if the delegate is aware of it.

This is but a small sampling of the kind of great resources that are out there. However, most great sources come from recognized entities that attract experts in their field. If a website has a dated design and isn't affiliated with a reputable organization, it's most likely not going to provide the kind of deep insights that can make a delegate stand out in committee.

Activity: Debate Maps

Objective: Students will be able to articulate a research plan for their committee's topic by the end of the activity

Materials Required:

- Paper for students
- Optionally, chart paper

Time Requirement: 30 minutes

Procedure: We already described the process for creating a debate map above, but students should actually take the time to do it! Debate maps are typically used once a student has done the basic research on a topic (i.e. read the background guide, done some research on the topic and their country's policy) and is ready to think about broader connections that can be made.

In a group setting, distribute a piece of paper to each student. Ask them to write their topic in the center and circle it. Guide the students through the steps outlined in the section above to create their debate map. For delegates who are new to the concept, it is suggested that the teacher or student leader create an example on chart paper so that students can see what the finished product should look like.

As students complete their debate maps individually (or in groups, if there are multiple students in the same committee), the teacher or student leader should walk around and highlight strong thinking around the room. This will likely push other students to think of additional connections for their debate maps. At the end of the activity, the teacher can showcase some of the best

debate maps or have the students do a quick gallery walk to see the other debate maps that were made.

At the end, the teacher should be sure to push the students to think critically about what they will research next! Students can write reflections on the back of the page, highlight or share the bubbles that represent new research, or whatever other method works with the students.

Activity: Data Stories

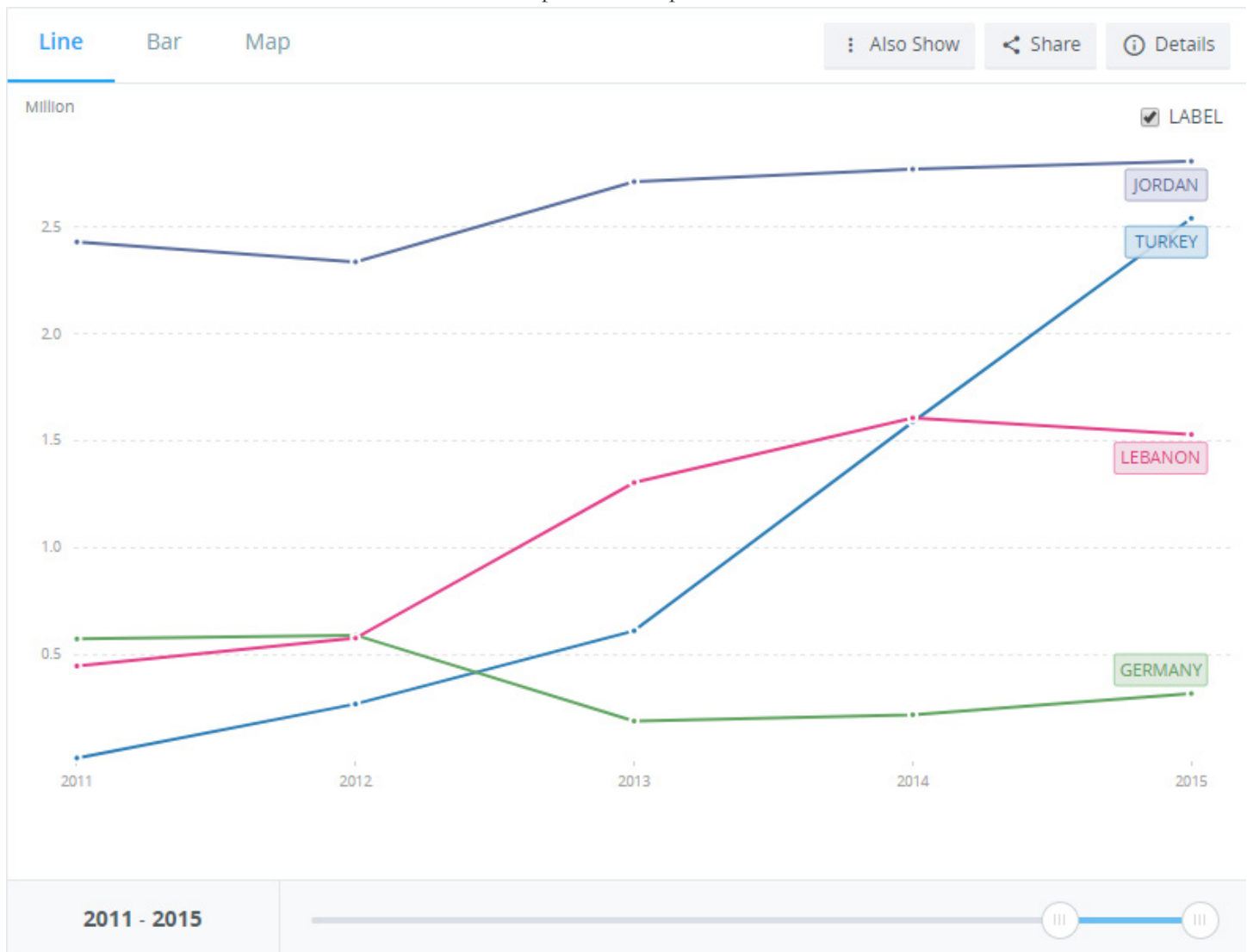
Objective: Students will be able to use data and statistics as part of a narrative around their topic and/or country policy.

Materials Required:

- Computers for students

Time Requirement: 30-90 minutes

Procedure: While data is great, unfortunately many students don't know how to effectively use data as part of a broader argument. This activity forces students to think about ways they can include this data. Because this activity involves independent work and lots of research, it's best if each student has a computer to complete it, whether at home or school.



The challenge to students is to write a report about their country's policy in a highly structured setting that strikes the right balance between narrative and data. We find that the best way to do this is to have students incorporate one chart after each paragraph that illustrates the **main idea** of that paragraph. Focusing on the main idea is important, because as most teachers know, students' attention spans can wander frequently in their writing. To reinforce this, we also suggest that teachers require students to bold the main idea at the start of each paragraph. Below is one example chart and spoken information for the topic of "The Syrian Civil War."

Refugee Locations: While the influx of refugees to Europe is unlike anything seen on the continent in decades, the refugee situation is actually far direr in other countries. In fact, the vast majority of refugees flee to neighboring countries because passage to Europe is expensive and requires dangerous trips over water. Turkey, Lebanon, and Jordan combine to host more than 6 million refugees from Syria and other regional hotspots (compared to Germany's 300,000 (as of 2015).

This admittedly grainy screenshot on the previous page is intentionally chosen, as it was created with the World Bank Open Data tool with no programming or chart manipulation required. Any delegate with an internet connection can create this chart.

Alternatively, students can also prepare a slideshow and present it to the class with the stipulation that only charts and data can appear on the slides. This helps reinforce public speaking skills while still requiring that the discussion stay rooted in the data.

Measuring the Dais

Almost every talented delegate has at least one story about a conference where they were allegedly cheated out of an award usually because of the dais. While it's natural to vent, it's important to recognize that the dais is, for the most part, not to blame. Dais staff are as unique as the people that compose them, so when it comes to what they are looking for from delegates, every dais will have different preferences. This is why delegates that want to stand out in committee need to be able to measure their dais even before they walk into the committee room. If the dais has a strong focus on negotiation and diplomacy, hyper-aggressive delegates are going to struggle no matter what.

Many readers may be thinking that the practice of adapting debating skills to the dais of the committee is manipulative or gamey. The often-repeated argument is that students should be judged by the content of their speeches rather than how well they play the game. These arguments miss the fact that debate is an inherently subjective activity. Whether a student is at a MUN conference or doing parliamentary debate, a human must judge the debate. An argument that is compelling to one person might fail to impress another. This same principle applies to other delegates as well. The best researched delegate doesn't always lead their caucus bloc largely because other delegates may not be as compelled by the research as they are. This isn't to say that MUN is only about presentation and speechcraft. Empty speeches from delegates also rarely win awards. However, failing to recognize the human element in debate will always prevent delegates and teachers from reaching their full potential.

Just as delegates who don't research their country policy before the conference are at a disadvantage, delegates who don't do some pre-conference research are also disadvantaged. There are two things that delegates should focus on: the **conference** and the **dais**.

Before the Conference

The conference will often be the driving factor behind what skills a dais is looking for. Most MUN conferences have an internal philosophy about the role of MUN education, which forms the basis of their dais training program. At IMUNA, our philosophy tends to favor negotiation and education, rewarding well-researched dealmakers rather than authoritarian leaders. Other conferences may recognize the best speakers or the delegates that write the draft resolution. Whatever the philosophy is, most conferences are open about what their philosophy is, making it easy for delegates to research. Consider the following examples from various conferences (emphasis added).

"Education is at the heart of YMUN...Our chairs are Yale students chosen based on their **commitment to learning** and their **passion for the topics** of each committee: each chair is a dedicated educator and expert ready to be proactive with delegates."¹

"Attendants of THIMUN conferences aims to seek, through discussion, negotiation and debate, solutions to the various problems of the world...The **research and preparation** required, the **adoption of views and attitudes other than their own**, the involvement and **interaction** with so many other young people from around the world, all combine to give the young people a deep insight into the world's problems."²

"We endeavor to provide **competitive simulations** and **rigorous substance** without losing sight of the educational and bridge-building value of Model UN as an activity."³

These three descriptions share a lot in common, but there are also some key differences that suggest the conference's focus. YMUN keeps the spotlight on education and learning, THIMUN keeps the spotlight on research and negotiation, and NAI-

1 Yale Model United Nations, "About Us," Yale Model United Nations, accessed August 28, 2017, <http://www.ymun.yira.org/about/>.

2 "Thimun Foundation - About," THIMUN Foundation, accessed August 28, 2017, <http://www.thimun.org/index.php/about>.

3 NAIMUN, "About - NAIMUN LV," NAIMUN LV, accessed August 28, 2017, <http://naimun.modelun.org/about/>.

MUN focuses on competition and substantive rigor. Delegates attending each of these conferences would do well to tailor their approach to the conference's focus.

After researching the conference, there is usually some additional information that can be learned about the dais staff themselves. Most background guides include a letter from the director or dais staff that details their background and what they are looking forward to at the conference. Some will state what the dais is looking for from delegates, but even if they don't, reading about the chair's background in the letter can give some clues about their chairing style. Humans naturally tend to be drawn to others like themselves, so building an understanding about the dais members will shed light on their committee management style. For example, daises that are heavily engaged in the competitive college MUN circuit will generally look for more overt signs of leadership and authority, while those that aren't as engaged are more likely to look for diplomacy and compromise.

What we caution delegates against is emailing their dais to ask what they prefer to see in delegates. This isn't to discourage delegates from contacting their dais at all; they are often a great source of research and can be helpful even to advanced delegates. However, emailing just to discuss the best way to stand out in committee comes off as opportunistic and shallow usually.

At the Conference

While there are many other things to pay attention to at a MUN conference, it's important to observe the dais while debating to continue to find out what they're looking for.

First, a note on what delegates should *never* do. It is always incredibly obvious when a delegate increases their participation or focus whenever a dais member or faculty adviser walks by. Attempts to spontaneously jump into debate almost never seem natural. In fact, delegates that do this are usually just drawing attention to the fact that they weren't participating before. Similarly, it is never necessary to be speaking every time a dais member or faculty adviser walks by. Again, this behavior seems at best unusual and at worst domineering over the caucus bloc. Dais staff are very capable of observing leadership from afar based on body language. Usually, daises walk through committee mostly to hear what is being discussed in each group.



So, what should delegates do? In many cases, finding out what the chairs are looking for will be easy, as many daises will introduce themselves at the start of the committee. Often this will include a description of the skills they are looking for from delegates. Even before that, though, delegates can use the time right before committee as everyone is walking into the room to introduce themselves to the dais and ask a few questions. Again, asking “what do you look for?” looks opportunistic. Delegates can instead talk about their experience, their preparedness, and any last-minute questions they have about the substantive content to drive this conversation. A strong understanding of the conference’s philosophy will help guide this conversation.

Delegates should continue to pay attention to the dais’s behavior during debate. Even without a stated strategy, the dais’s training is likely to become obvious very quickly. For example, daises that are focused on the educational aspect of MUN will be more likely to pause debate to create debate maps or host a question and answer session about the topic. Daises that are more interested in the competitive aspect of MUN, though, are more likely to be hands off.

Finally, we have one last strategy that should *never* be used: making frequent, unnecessary small talk with the dais. The dais is usually quite busy juggling its many responsibilities that go well beyond just banging the gavel. Delegates that frequently approach the dais to make small talk are more likely to be seen as annoying than enthusiastic. Furthermore, most daises are trained not to show favoritism towards delegates to ensure that feedback is fair. When a delegate spends an inordinate amount of time at the dais, the dais will remember that training and may even ask the delegate to return to their seat to avoid the appearance of favoritism. Delegates that want to do well in committee should focus more on debate than their dais.

Activity: Conference Reports

Objective: Students will be able to analyze the information available about a conference and dais to determine what approach they should take as a delegate

Materials Required:

- Computers for students or a computer connected to a projector

Time Requirement: 15-30 minutes

Procedure: Practice makes perfect, so this activity has students make use of the strategies discussed above to prepare for the next conference. Individually or as a group, students visit the website of their next conference and see if they can identify that conference’s philosophy based on the information available on the conference’s website. Even if students work individually, the teacher or student leader should bring the group back together for a full-class discussion about what they are noticing. After looking at the conference’s philosophy, students turn their attention to the director letters either individually or in groups of students in the same committee. Again, once the group conversations are complete, the teacher or student leader should bring their conversation back for a full-class discussion.

Creating a Narrative

Good research is nothing without strong presentation. In fact, presentation should *inform* research. Data and statistics-heavy research will lead to data and statistics-heavy speeches, but those are not the only things that compel people. People’s attention is captured by stories with characters whose issues they can understand and who they can be motivated to help. In this way, MUN is like a form of theater. It is each delegate’s job to create a narrative for the topic that will align other delegates with their way of seeing the world. This section will help delegates understand what a narrative can look like and why it is useful, and then it will provide instructions for how to develop a narrative for any topic.

Setting the Scene

Improv is truly one of the best ways to practice MUN. It not only hones delegates’ quick-thinking skills, which are invaluable in speeches and caucuses alike, but it also teaches delegates how to create a scene without the use of any props. The importance of setting a scene ties back to the old adage of “show, don’t tell.” Humans are emotional and subjective by nature, so the most well researched speech delivered in a dry tone is unlikely to impress many people.

Setting a scene works by bringing to the surface the underlying emotions beneath most international topics. Debaters by instinct will approach horrifying crimes like sex trafficking in a dispassionate, academic way because that is what they are taught to do. They’ll largely discuss ways to curb sex trafficking and be more forceful against traffickers as if they were talking about a math problem. However, consider the following two speeches:

Speaker A: “Sex crimes are among the most heinous that the international community tolerates. The most recent estimate from the International Labour Organization (ILO) states that 1.2 million children are trafficked each year, many of whom are forced into sexual labor.⁴ Many governments, especially those in Africa, don’t have laws to adequately punish human traffickers.⁵ However, most of these trafficking victims are eventually prosecuted for crimes such as prostitution or immigration offenses. The international community must work to protect children from these horrible lives, and we urge all delegates to join us in the next caucus to work on this.”

Speaker B: “Every day, hundreds of thousands of impoverished families around the world that feel like they have no other option **willingly** sell their daughters to sex traffickers to make ends meet. Those young girls are then illegally smuggled to foreign countries where they cannot communicate with others and are forced into sex **slavery**. For these girls, there is no hope and no help on the way. After being repeatedly victimized by their captors, they are eventually caught and arrested by authorities and charged for **prostitution** or even for **illegal immigration** to a country they were forced into. This committee can and should work hard to catch and prosecute the traffickers, but if we don’t look at our own laws and practices as well, then we are just as complicit in this terrible crime as the traffickers. If your country is interested in truly protecting these young women, we urge you to join us in the next caucus.

The difference between the two should be clear! Speaker A made a decent speech. They demonstrated expertise with their factual knowledge, gave a weak call to action, even if it was weak. They even provided more factual information than Speaker B. For a beginner delegate, this would be a fantastic speech.

However, we find Speaker B to be more compelling because they paint a complete picture for the delegates. Many delegates will

4 “Child Trafficking,” UNICEF, March 20, 2011, https://www.unicef.org/protection/57929_58005.html.

5 “Global_Report_on_TIP.pdf,” accessed August 30, 2017, http://www.unodc.org/documents/Global_Report_on_TIP.pdf.

not consider exactly what challenges the victims of sex trafficking face. This is fair! It's a life that most people are thankfully unfamiliar with. However, a skilled delegate will set the scene and show (not tell) the challenges faced at every stage, from the awful decisions that families believe they have to make to the eventual revictimization of children as they are prosecuted for crimes they did not want to commit. It's true that there are fewer statistics included in the speech, but the demonstrated understanding of these challenges for victims is just as much the product of careful research as any statistic.

As with many things in life, moderation is key. Overdramatized pageants can come off as disingenuous or even mocking of the victims. In the above example, trying to mime out how children get separated from their parents would be in extremely poor taste. Delegates should maintain a professional, but impassioned composure during their speech and make sure the narrative reinforces rather than outshines the issues.

Developing a Story

In the sex trafficking example from the last section, it was pretty easy to identify who the victims were, even if some of the *ways* in which they were victimized weren't obvious. For other topics, the victims may not be as clear or may not be as immediately sympathetic. This step by step guide will walk delegates through how to develop and research a strong story for their topic that is in line with their country policy

Research the Topic

Before even starting to outline a story, delegates should fully research the background of their topic and their country's basic policy on it. Without this background knowledge, any attempt to go through the following steps will be guess work, which will mostly likely lead to a poor understanding of the topic.

Identify the Victims

Even when identifying who the victims are appears easy, delegates should carefully think about any secondary victims that might exist. In the sex trafficking example, the speaker was able to identify the families of young girls as victims, as they are put into a position where they are led to believe that they have no other choice but to sell their children.

For some topics, even identifying a primary victim can be challenging. Consider a committee discussing cryptocurrencies (e.g. Bitcoin, Ethereum) and whether the international community should try to regulate them. At first glance, there don't appear to be any major victims. Yes, there are cases of fraud and hacking, but those are negligible relative to the billions of dollars currently stored in cryptocurrencies. However, a little research will show that many critics of cryptocurrencies highlight their inaccessibility as a major concern. Creating a Bitcoin wallet requires a strong familiarity with technology and the internet, but



only about half of the world uses the internet regularly.⁶ Therefore, cryptocurrencies represent a growing pot of wealth that is inaccessible to most people. This suggests a broad group of victims.

However, perspectives on who the victims are often change based on country policy. Continuing our cryptocurrency example, some countries may argue that individuals should have the freedom to store their money however they want. Such countries could also look at the data very differently. In the last paragraph, we highlighted that only about half the world has internet access. If, however, a delegate wanted to demonstrate the vast number of people that can invest in Bitcoin, they could argue that anyone with an internet connection can invest in this exciting new currency, creating a new opportunity for *over 3 billion people!* It's the same fact, but it is presented in a vastly different light. Therefore, when it comes to identifying victims, countries that are supportive of cryptocurrencies might highlight the cryptocurrencies and their users as the potential victims that must be protected from heavy handed government intervention.

Identify the Source of Each Problem

Once the victims are identified, delegates should spend time thinking about what the true driver of the problem is. Let's return to the sex trafficking example. Most families do not want to sell their children to sex traffickers. Yes, sex traffickers often use predatory tactics to coerce families, but families usually aren't even willing to entertain the idea of selling their children without an exceptionally good reason. For many, it's a matter of poverty. Some families struggle to feed and clothe their children, adding a sense of desperation. Traffickers prey on this desperation when they make their approach. Therefore, delegates may choose to pursue one or both of these reasons why families sell their children to traffickers. Of course, these are not the only drivers. This issue is far too complex to summarize in a single paragraph, but this should illustrate the kind of thinking that delegates should do on their topics.

Let's also work through the cryptocurrency topic. For countries that criticize cryptocurrencies for being out of reach of non-internet users, we already identified two drivers. One cause is that cryptocurrencies are complex and inaccessible to people who aren't skilled with internet technologies. Making them more accessible would lower the barrier to entry. Similarly, getting more people on the internet would also help lower that barrier. Again, countries can decide to pursue one or both angles, but delegates should recognize that there are multiple approaches to the problem.

Develop Solutions

In the situation described above, we discussed two drivers that can be addressed to stop traffickers from even acquiring their victims: poverty and trafficker access. At this point, delegates should consider how the UN can relieve those pressures. First (and perhaps most obviously), the committee should develop ways to protect communities from sex traffickers. However, this is easier said than done, as most traffickers won't identify themselves as such. But the committee has another choice: offer relief for families living in extreme poverty, or even just make families aware of the relief that's already available to them. This can come in many forms, and the choice of how to relieve this poverty will likely depend on the delegate's country and their preferred approach. Whatever solution is chosen, though, should directly address the root of the problem.

Bringing it All Together

The overall goal of this process is for delegates to develop a strategy that combines **deep research** and **compelling arguments**. Students new to this process should create a written version of their narrative to refer to throughout the rest of their research

⁶ "Internet Used by 3.2 Billion People in 2015," BBC News, May 26, 2015, sec. Technology, <http://www.bbc.com/news/technology-32884867>.

and the conference. This outline should walk through each of the steps above, since they will each play a role at different stages of debate. As policy speeches are being made, delegates will be largely focused on just identifying the victims and the causes of the problem, only hinting at solutions. Towards the end of committee, there will be less of a need to identify the victims and more of a need to bring concrete solutions to the caucus bloc as the draft resolution is written and debated. With all the pieces put together, delegates simply need to rely on their basic, well-trained speaking skills to see their plan executed in committee.

Activity: Alphabet Game

Objective: Students will be able to incorporate elements of improv and theater into their speeches to make them more compelling.

Materials Required: None

Time Requirement: 5 minutes

Procedure: We mentioned at the start of this section that improv is one of the best ways to practice MUN skills, so playing improv games is a great use of class time. One game that we like is called the Alphabet Game. First, two to four students should be selected to act out a scene, although we recommend starting with just two people at first. The teacher can ask the other students for an idea for a scene to act out, and there's no need to keep it MUN related! Once the scene is chosen, the students must then improvise lines such that the first line starts with A, the second line starts with B, the third line C, and so on. Optionally, if a student takes too long or cannot think of a line, then they go back to the audience and another student with a line is chosen to go up and replace them. After each round, there should be time for feedback for all participants, ideally focused on how well they brought the scene to life with just words.

Activity: Emotional Dissonance

Objective: Students will be able to consciously use emotional speaking techniques to reinforce their arguments

Materials Required: None

Time Requirement: 5 minutes per student

Procedure: The other great improv game that we'll highlight is one that lets students practice channeling emotion into their speech regardless of what they're saying. To begin, one student should be selected to tell any story they'd like. Let the student begin telling the story, encouraging them to channel the proper emotions with their speech without being over the top. After a bit, the teacher or a pre-designated student should call out a mood or emotion that the student should channel (e.g. anger, sleepiness, fear). The student should then continue the *same* story, but channeling the emotion called out. A student telling a happy story may be instructed to tell it in a sad way. The product should hopefully be humorous, but the game is also great for making students think about and realize what they do to sound sad, angry, etc.

There are many other great improv games that are only a Google search away. If students like the two examples above, groups are encouraged to find other helpful improv games that will train these speaking skills.

Activity: Three Bears v. Goldilocks

Objective: Students will be able to identify and develop arguments supporting their side of a debate

Materials Required: Text of a fairy tale

Time Requirement: 30-60 minutes

Procedure: Although the title suggests “Goldilocks and the Three Bears,” any common fairy tale can be used for this activity. To start, have students read the same version of the fairy tale selected. They must read the *same* version to avoid any issues around different interpretations of the story. Once everyone has read the story, divide the class into two groups. Assign one group to Team Goldilocks and the other Team Three Bears.

Tell the students that the class will be staging a trial of the Three Bears against Goldilocks for breaking and entering and destruction of property (or whatever charges the teacher wants to include). Using evidence from the text and a strong narrative, both teams must create an argument about why Goldilocks should or should not be convicted. “Goldilocks and the Three Bears” is a great example because both sides can be cast in a sympathetic light easily. However, even characters like the wolf from “The Three Little Pigs” can be defended by more advanced delegates.

Once the students are ready, the teacher should structure speeches for both sides depending on the time available. We’ve found that three rounds of 2- to 4-minute speeches per team work well. As always, a debrief should follow this exercise to highlight what arguments worked well, what arguments did not, and how these skills relate back to MUN.

Making Policy Speeches

Speeches are the only time that delegates will have the full attention of the committee for more than a few fleeting seconds, and there is no speech more important than a delegate's first speech, the policy speech. This speech is not only the delegate's first impression on the committee, but it is also their best chance to start the committee with a large caucus bloc behind them. In this section, we'll discuss some strategies to keep policy speeches informative and lively so that the delegate becomes a focal point during the first unmoderated caucus.

Before diving into the content below, delegates should first review the rule of threes, discussed in the Beginner Delegate Guide. The rule of threes is still the foundation of creating an effective speech, although as noted in that guide, advanced delegates should feel free to tinker with the framework to meet their personal speaking style.

Establishing Expertise

The first objective is to establish the speaker's expertise on the subject matter. This must be demonstrated throughout the speech, not just with a single statistic in the middle of it. Establishing expertise is important because at the start of committee, delegates will naturally assume that the well-researched delegates will be the ones to lead the committee. That doesn't mean that committee leaders are always well researched, but the expertise will make assuming a leadership role much easier.

How does a delegate establish expertise? The most obvious way is to make sure that the speech is backed up with facts, quotes, and statistics. Even delegates whose minds are wandering can tell when a speech is well researched and when a delegate is simply blowing hot air. However, research should also be consistently supported by a narrative. Pointlessly rattling off a long list of statistics is likely to be *less* impressive than a speech with no research at all.

One of the other ways to establish expertise is to have a unique policy on the issue. Consider a standard MUN topic like DISEC debating nuclear proliferation. Delegates are going to hear a lot of policy speeches about how nuclear proliferation is bad and how the international community must work to secure existing weapons, prevent the creation of new weapons, and levy sanctions on countries acquiring nuclear weapons. That's a boilerplate policy that many countries do share. A delegate that wants to stand out, however, will offer a fresh take that can only come with research. In our hypothetical debate, a delegate could bypass the usual rhetoric entirely and instead aggressively advocate for a policy of tracking uranium production at its source, as proposed by a group of prominent former US diplomats.⁷ New ideas grab people's attention, so advocating for a non-standard solution that is still in line with the country's policy helps establish expertise.

Clear, Simple Policy Statement

We discussed in the Beginner Delegate Guide that delegates are likely to remember only a few key points from any given speech. Therefore, every policy speech should have a clear, simple, one sentence statement summarizing the policy. That's the sentence that the delegate wants the committee to remember, even if everyone falls asleep halfway through the speech. We have a few guidelines for what this sentence should look like:

- **Brief:** It's not helpful to bend the one sentence rule by constructing a run-on sentence. Get to the point quickly to help it stand out more.

- **Bad:** "Kenya's policy is that nuclear proliferation must be stopped at all costs by tracking materials at their source

⁷ George Shultz et al., "Next Steps in Reducing Nuclear Risks," The Wall Street Journal, March 5, 2013, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424127887324338604578325912939001772>.

of production, in existing warheads, and in transit in order to create a world safe from the abject horror of nuclear weapons.”

- **Good:** “The only way to prevent nuclear proliferation is to create an aggressive, comprehensive tracking program for fissile material.”
- **Focused:** The statement also doesn’t need to be comprehensive. Keep the statement focused on the main idea of the policy and answer any questions that other delegates have during an underrated caucus.
 - **Bad:** “Ghana strongly supports a broad scope of solutions, including tracking nuclear weapons at their source, working to reduce the number of nuclear weapons in stockpiles, securing the nuclear weapons that are vulnerable to theft, and applying firm sanctions against countries that would violate the NPT.”
 - **Good:** “We urge the committee to implement a full spectrum solution, preventing new nuclear weapons states and holding existing states accountable.”
- **Not Country Specific:** Avoid phrases like “India believes” and “China urges.” Those are filler words that limit the statement to just the delegate that’s speaking. Instead, urge the committee, the international community, or the UN to take actions.
 - **Bad:** “Bolivia believes in the implementation of nuclear-weapons-free zones around the world to keep us safe from nuclear weapons”
 - **Good:** “This committee must foster the development of nuclear-weapons-free zones if we are to truly halt the spread of nuclear weapons.”

Energy

Although every delegate gets their time in the spotlight for their policy speech, it can be quite tedious to also listen to everyone else’s policy speech, especially when “everyone else” is 250 other delegates. As the committee hears more speeches, the amount of attention given to each speech will decline. This is why energy is so important. Every speaker must be ready to wake up the committee and compel its attention, even if they are speaking first. The strongest delegates don’t need to resort to gamey tactics to ensure they are at the top of the speakers list. The best delegates work just fine from the middle of the speakers list as well.

Many delegates are unsure of what having energy looks like. This is where many delegates run the risk of turning their speech into a dramatic performance. In a professional speaking environment like MUN, having high energy means remembering the basic of public speaking, applying useful emphasis on



words, and speaking confidently from memory.

The basics of public speaking are something that need to be drilled frequently by even the most advanced delegates, just as professional athletes run drills before games. Volume is often the first skill to decline, as delegates must always adjust their volume to the size of the room. Body language is also important to drill. Delegates who have practiced their policy speech dozens of times may be inclined to slouch and look tired during the actual speech. Other basics that are just as important are appropriate hand motions, limiting movement around the room, and eliminating the use of filler words.

Besides those basics, the best way to bring energy to a room is using appropriate emphasis on certain words. This should never be purely improvised! Even the best public speakers think through what they want to emphasize in their speech. Doing so also does not require speakers to full script their speech (which many advanced delegates are loathe to do). Bullet points with notated emphasis are just as helpful when preparing a speech. However a delegate chooses to do it, they must elevate some words and phrases above others to wake the rest of the committee up.

Finally, we urge all advanced delegates to work on giving up the crutch of notecards and other written tools during speeches. Every fraction of a second spent staring at a notecard is time for listeners to become disengaged and distracted. Most MUN speeches are less than two minutes long, so memorizing the key talking points before a speech shouldn't be challenging. Eliminating this crutch will help speakers maintain eye contact with the room and the forward momentum of their speech.

Call to Action

Marketers use the term call to action to identify the part of an advertisement that urges the consumer to buy a product or take an action. Every delegate with internet access has been exposed to a call to action at some point. Websites frequently urge visitors to subscribe their emails or create accounts as a way of pushing the visitor to interact more with the page. This concept is much older than the internet, but it continues to be used because it is incredibly effective.

Delegates should make use of this strategy in their speeches to give the committee a next step for further interaction with their policy. The desired outcome is for other delegates in the room to remember the speaker and want to engage with them more. Some delegates keep it simple, requesting that the committee approach them during an unmod to discuss their ideas. This, however, generally fails to be compelling, especially when there are other delegates making the same request. Instead delegates can consider less overt calls that ask delegates to reflect on their own country policy. In this way, delegates are making their own choice about whether the speaker is an ally and pushes each listener to *decide* to seek out the speaker. Here are some examples:

“We urge all delegates interested in the creation of nuclear-weapons-free zones to join us during the next unmoderated caucus to help us build a better, safer tomorrow.”

“If your country also wishes to see uranium tracked from extraction to refinement, come join us during the next caucus as we develop a solution to hold all states accountable.”

We should note that this strategy is not unique to policy speeches. Calls to action can be effectively used when the speaker has a working paper or draft resolution that they want others in the committee to join or when voting procedure is approaching. Whatever the goal is, issuing a clear next step to the committee is likely to win far more allies than just stating a goal and hoping that others will know what to do.



Seating Arrangements, Handouts, and other Less Effective Tactics

There are many tricks to policy speeches that veteran MUNers have taught for years. This guide makes no claim to be fully comprehensive, and there are other effective strategies that we don't cover. However, we do want to highlight some strategies that we think are less effective even though they have become traditions for veteran delegates.

The first strategy that we discourage is the need to sit in the front of the room. We've seen delegates become pushy and even argumentative about seating arrangements. The assumption is that the dais will be more likely to call on delegates sitting in the first few rows. In truth, good dais are trained to select speakers from around the room, and many dais track speakers to ensure that one person is not being chosen too often. However, if a dais member sees a delegate getting aggressive over a seat, they will form a bad impression of the delegate. Strong delegates should avoid the very back of the room, but they should also know how to be effective anywhere in the front half of the room.

Many advanced delegates have been to conferences where a delegate has prepared a handout or business card for everyone. While these tactics show extensive preparation, they often come off as a gimmick, lacking any true substance. Delegates that employ these tactics and are successful can usually attribute their success to other strategies, not a handout. Preparation time is better spent developing a strong policy speech and brainstorming novel solutions rather than printing hundreds of handouts.

Similarly, other delegates may bring a visual presentation with them to enhance their policy speech. Most conferences unfortunately still do not provide a means for delegates to project digital presentations. Even if they do, the time required to set up a

presentation will usually be counted against a delegate's speaking time in the interest of fairness. If a delegate gets permission for a presentation before a conference, they should feel free to use one, although we suggest sending the materials to the dais in advance so they can have it ready on their computers. However, delegates shouldn't be surprised if the dais declines the request.

Dual Delegations

Finally, we'll close out this section with a note about how these strategies can change when working within a dual delegation. For the most part, the advice above applies just as well to dual delegations as they do to single delegations. Delegates should still establish their expertise, demonstrate high energy, and include a call to action. The real question is who says what?

This is where the rule of threes can also be helpful as a framework. In general, it's a good idea for one speaker to express one idea. Changing the speaker in the middle of an idea is likely to be a distraction to delegates. Within the rule of threes framework, assign one section to each person. That means one delegate will express the introduction (including the policy statement), one supporting argument, and the conclusion (including the call to action). and the other delegate will express the other two supporting arguments. There will likely be an imbalance in speaking time, but this should not be a major concern, as the speakers can change who will deliver the larger half of the next speech.

We also strongly recommend that dual delegations avoid gimmicks that don't help build arguments. We've seen delegates come up with some creative ways to grab the committee's attention, like reciting a memorized speech at the same time or having one delegate speak a foreign language and the other delegate translate. While interesting, we've found that these tactics rarely create a sense of credibility both with the dais and the delegates.

Activity: Speech Screenings

Objective: Students will be able to analyze their own speeches to improve their speaking techniques.

Materials Required:

- Video recorder (the built-in webcam on most laptops will work fine!)

Time Requirement: 10-60 minutes

Procedure: This activity can really be considered an activity for any of the following speech-related sections as well. We recommend doing this activity once delegates have outlined their policy speech. First, a delegate should deliver their speech in front of a video recorder. Students should be told to continue their speech even if they mess up (which is good practice for when students actually do stumble in committee), and someone should keep time for the student. Once complete, the student should be able to watch their own speech in the video. The teacher or student leader should urge the student to give themselves glows and grows (what went well and what could be improved) and describe what they should practice during their next few speeches.

A good way to set this up for larger classes is to use two rooms. In one room, 1-2 students get recorded at a time. In the other room, the class watches the recordings of speeches and can help give the speaker feedback on what compelled them and what did not. Therefore, while new videos are created in one room, the previous videos can be commented on in the other. This can be done without video recording, but then the speaker isn't able to watch themselves, which can be far more compelling than *only* hearing feedback from other students.

Activity: Time Yourself

Objective: Students will be able to speak for a specified duration of time without the use of a clock or timer.

Materials Required:

- Timer

Time Requirement: 5-20 minutes

Procedure: This simple activity is a great warmup before conferences but is also a good drill to use in regular class meetings. For advanced delegates that have far more to say than beginner delegates, staying within the speaking time can be a challenge. In this activity, the teacher or student leader should give a student a topic that they can comfortably talk about and a time limit, ideally sixty seconds for those new to this activity. Any clocks or timers in view of the speaker should be covered. The student's goal is to end their speech as close to the time limit as possible. By strengthening a student's internal clock, they'll be able to judge how much more time they have in their speech without relying on the chair's gavel tap (which they sometimes forget to do). Once students have mastered one time limit, the teacher or student leader can increase the difficulty by consistently changing the time limit between speeches while still pushing students to end as close to the time limit as possible.

Activity: Call to Vacation

Objective: Students will be able to deliver an effective call to action on a new topic.

Materials Required:

- Optional: Small pieces of paper for each student

Time Requirement: 20-60 minutes

Procedure: If the title didn't give it away, this activity is great for getting students to practice making calls to action. Each student should be assigned one country. This can be either a country they are assigned for a MUN conference or a random country, but each student should have a *unique* country. Then, the teacher or student leader should present the activity: each student will have one to two minutes to convince the class why they should take a group vacation to that country. Reinforce the idea that the call to action will be important here, as the goal is to convince the class to vote for your country. If students aren't familiar with the country they are assigned, some brief research time should be given.

Once students are ready, have students go one by one making their case. Teachers can optionally provide feedback at the end of each speech, but we recommend saving feedback for the end so as not to influence votes. Once every student has gone, the class should take a vote on where they want to go on vacation. To ensure a diverse vote, we recommend giving each student 1-4 slips of paper that represent votes that they can put into cups or another small container representing each country. A simple "raise your hand" vote also works, though. The winner is whoever receives the most votes! As always, the teacher should lead a debrief at the end of the activity to discuss why that person won and why they were so compelling.

Tactical Motions and Speaking

In most committees, whenever the dais asks, “are there any points or motions on the floor?” there are a gaggle of placards that go up quickly. As many novice delegates become more confident in their skills, they often find themselves frequently raising their placards to speak in moderated caucuses. However, advanced delegates also know that chairs actively try to diversify who speaks when. If a delegate has spoken many times and always has their placard up, the chair is likely to ignore them until there are no other new speakers. For a strong delegate hoping to make a point at a critical time, this could hurt them in committee.

This demonstrates the need for tactical motions and speaking. Trying to do both all the time will cause delegates to miss critical opportunities. Ideally, when a strong delegate raises their placard, the dais should notice and be willing to call on that delegate. The goal for each delegate should be to strive to speak often enough to maintain a strong presence in the room, but not have their placard raised so often that they are ignored by default.

When Should Delegates Speak?

Most advanced delegates are natural speakers. When another delegate says something they disagree with (or worse, against their working paper), they want to be addressing the room. This is why so many delegates are *constantly* trying to speak. If the goal isn't to speak constantly, though, how often should delegates be speaking? This is going to come down to a few factors that need to be weighed subjectively. There is no precise number of speeches per hour that can be calculated, but there are some guidelines to help delegates.

- **Room Size:** Obviously, the size of the room is going to play a big role in how often a delegate speaks. In small committees, delegates might be actively engaged throughout the conference. In larger committees, a delegate might be fortunate to speak more than once an hour. Advanced delegates should hopefully already have an instinct for this.
- **Number of Active Delegates:** Some large committees may have only a few active delegates that speak regularly. Some small committees might have everyone actively engaged. Delegates should look for the 5-10 other delegates that are speaking the most and use their number of speeches as a benchmark. Remember that the goal is not to speak the most. However, keeping pace with or just slightly behind the most prolific speakers is a good place to be.
- **Recency Bias:** Recency bias is the tendency of people to be most influenced by recent events when making a judgement about someone or something. In the MUN world, this means that if a delegate is selected to make multiple speeches in a short amount of time, the dais is more likely to mentally flag them as a frequent speaker and therefore reduce the number of times they call on the delegate in the future. For delegates trying to toe that line, making a quick series of speeches could ensure they aren't called on going forward.
- **When There's Content:** This may sound obvious, but delegates should speak when they have something unique and valuable to contribute. If the committee's last few speeches have essentially just summarized that global warming should be prevented, then delegates should resist the urge to “waste” a speech just to pile onto that obvious narrative. Delegates should instead save speaking opportunities when there's something valuable to say.

Placard Strategy for Moderated Caucuses

There is a strategy to when a delegate should raise their placard. The reason is that there are two opposing forces at play. First, the dais is unlikely to call on someone the first time they raise their placard unless they have rarely spoken, which incentivizes delegates to raise their placard more often. However, if the dais gets used to seeing a placard, they are more likely to ignore it.



This incentivizes them to raise the placard less frequently. So where is the balance just right?

As a rule of thumb, delegates should expect to get called on within 5 speeches of when they first raise their placard. This number might be larger for the largest committees and smaller for tiny crisis committees, but it won't significantly change. If the dais waits longer, it means that the dais is tired of hearing from the delegate and wants to hear other voices. If the dais jumps at the opportunity to call on a delegate, it means they aren't participating enough.

Because of the expected lag time between raising a placard and getting to speak, the best delegates attempt to "predict" when they will want to speak. This rules out jumping to speak to respond to another delegate's speech as a strategy, as frequently seen as it is in conferences. Instead, delegates should develop a sense of the committee's perspective on the moderated caucus's topic and contribute their voice if they have something new and valuable to add.

Making the Motion

A common strategy for delegates that try to maximize their number of speaking opportunities is to always be the one moving to enter moderated caucuses. This is because at most conferences, the convention is to invite the person who made the motion to speak first. Many delegates see this as a free pass to making more speeches, and they aren't wrong! If a delegate's goal is to maximize speaking opportunities, this is a great way to do it.

However, as we've discussed, the goal is *not* to maximize the number of opportunities but rather to maximize the impact of each speech. In a way, speaking first in a moderated caucus is perhaps the worst position to be in, as the delegate's odds of being able

to speak again during that moderated caucus are very low unless the committee is small. This leaves the delegate powerless to address the following speeches that will likely criticize or disagree with their policy. The most memorable part of those moderated caucuses tends to be the disagreement, not the initial statement. Furthermore, the assumption that speaking first is a “free” speech is unfounded, as dais members will still mentally (or actually) count that as a speech in their tally to determine who has spoken too much.

Instead, delegates should aim to be among the last speakers in a moderated caucus if possible. This puts them in a great position to address previous speakers or synthesize the arguments being made, helping portray themselves as a leader and compromiser. It also reduces the temptation to make broad policy statements in a moderated caucus. Delegates that want to truly convince other delegates need more than 30-45 seconds to make their case.

However, there are reasons for delegates to make the motion. First, let’s distinguish between **extending** and **refocusing** topics. Extending topics are the topics that the committee is already talking about. For example, if SOCHUM is debating the topic “LGBT Rights in the Developing World” and the most recent speeches have been about the death penalty for LGBT people, then a moderated caucus on the topic of “ending capital punishment for LGBT people” would be an extending topic. It is an extension of what the committee has already been discussing. Refocusing topics, on the other hand, help bring the committee’s attention to a topic that it has failed to adequately discuss. These topics are particularly useful when the previous speeches have been chaotic, with each speech prioritizing vastly different ideas. Refocusing topics can help focus the efforts of the committee to one idea at a time.

It’s best to be the first speaker for a refocusing topic, not an extending topic. In an extending topic, the delegate’s best hope is just to reargue or rebut what has been said before. These speeches easily get lost in the sea of similar speeches that take place before or after it. Refocusing topics, however, represent a new idea for delegates’ attention to move to. The first speech in a refocusing topic can break new ground and call the committee to action. The following speeches are likely to respond to and address the first speaker, helping make them the focal point of the caucus and thereby positioning them as a leader.

To summarize, it’s best for delegates to move to enter moderated caucuses when they have a refocusing topic in mind that will stand out. For extending topics, delegates are better off trying to make one of the final speeches in the caucus.

Placard Strategy for Unmoderated Caucuses

There is not as much strategy around moving to enter unmoderated caucuses, as there is little organization to them and no benefit to being the one to make the motion. For the most part, delegates should feel free to make and approve motions based on whether an unmoderated caucus would be strategic for them. However, the one thing that an unmoderated caucus can do is interrupt the flow of debate, which can be a tool for an advanced delegate. If a delegate notices that another caucus bloc is generating some positive attention for their draft resolution and wants to interrupt that momentum, an unmoderated caucus is a great tool for this. While an unmoderated caucus is a chance for the other caucus bloc to meet with the delegates they’re starting to win over, that bloc may have received more converts if the speeches were allowed to continue. However, this tactic should not be used often, as it’s usually far better to confront their ideas head on rather than letting their ideas go unanswered in front of the committee.

Activity: Caucus Debrief

Objective: Students will be able to identify the most effective speaker in a moderated caucus and why, applying that logic to their own speaking strategy.

Materials Required: N/A

Time Requirement: 5-10 minutes

Procedure: This activity is not a standalone activity but rather something that can be done during class or club MUN debates. While debating, at the end of each moderated caucus, have students vote on who gave the most effective speech during that moderated caucus. Have students explain their rationale why, and track on the board or on a piece of paper when that person spoke (i.e. first, second, third, etc.). At the end of the debate, review the winners and the strategies they used, and if it wasn't been shown already, show when those speakers spoke during the moderated caucus.

Activity: Placard Practice

Objective: Students will be able to determine the optimal time to make a motion.

Materials Required:

- Optional: placards for students

Time Requirement: 20-40 minutes



Procedure: To prepare for the activity, each student should have a placard or something they can use to silently signal the teacher. This might be a paper that's colored on one side that students can flip over or something they can tape to the front of their desks. Additionally, either the teacher or a student leader should serve as the chair for this activity.

Once the students are prepared, the chair should go through the normal process of starting a committee by opening debate, building a speakers list, etc. As students work their way through the speakers list, the chair should go through the normal process of asking for any points or motions. However, instead of actually taking any motions, the students should silently signal the chair if they would make a motion for a *moderated* caucus at that point. If using placards, the students can make their placards face down on their desk instead of standing up. Whatever the process, students should only signal the chair *once*. The chair should record how many delegates signal them after each speech. Speeches should continue until most delegates have given their signal. Once completed, the teacher should lead a debrief with the students, reviewing when most students would have made a motion. The distribution will most likely resemble a bell curve, so the teacher should have students who motioned at the peak of the bell curve explain their rationale as well as the students at the ends. The teacher should also be sure to tie the conversation back to extending and refocusing caucuses as well, asking students that speak whether the motion they would have made was an extending or refocusing motion.

Activity: An Annoying Performance

Objective: Students will be able to recognize destructive motioning strategies and articulate why they hurt a delegate's performance in committee.

Materials Required: None, unless students want props

Time Requirement: 60-90 minutes

Procedure: Many of the ideas discussed in this section are fairly abstract and difficult for delegates to visualize. This makes these concepts great for skits! In this activity, students in groups of 4-7 will develop skits showing just how destructive a bad motioning strategy can be. Students are encouraged to be creative, but each skit must include the following components:

- A delegate who always tries to speak first and as often as possible
- A delegate who uses the motioning strategies described in this section
- Mention of extending and refocusing motions.

Besides that, the content is up to the students! The students should be given ample time to prepare for their skit, after which they should perform their skit in front of the class or club.

Building Blocs

We've spent a lot of time discussing how to assemble a bloc just by giving speeches, but speeches alone won't build a strong bloc. In fact, blocs primarily grow during unmoderated caucuses, which only have the structure that delegates give it. Some delegates struggle in this environment, but a strong delegate will be just as comfortable in the formulaic environment of the speakers list as the chaotic environment of an unmoderated caucus. This section will discuss strategies that delegates use to not only stand out from the crowd but build a crowd around them in an unmoderated caucus.

Do Your Homework

As with most things MUN, delegates must take the time to prepare for bloc building. The most important thing that delegates should know going into an unmoderated caucus are which countries they are going to target. This should be a natural extension of their pre-conference research, but delegates likely won't be able to make the exact list until they arrive in committee and see what countries are being represented. Students should also be prepared to start to discuss solutions during the first caucus and should arrive ready with their top three solutions for the topic. Ideally these should be memorized, as it is less compelling to simply read off of a position paper, but notes are acceptable if referenced sparingly.

Before the first caucus, delegates should be listening to others' policy speeches and using those to target potential allies who will be sympathetic to their solutions. Note passing is a key strategy during this time. Anytime a delegate hears a speech in line with their ideas, they should send a note to that delegate asking that they meet during the first unmoderated caucus. This will help other delegates gravitate towards them. However, delegates should *not* send that note to everyone in committee, as that is likely to just make the first caucus chaotic and unproductive.

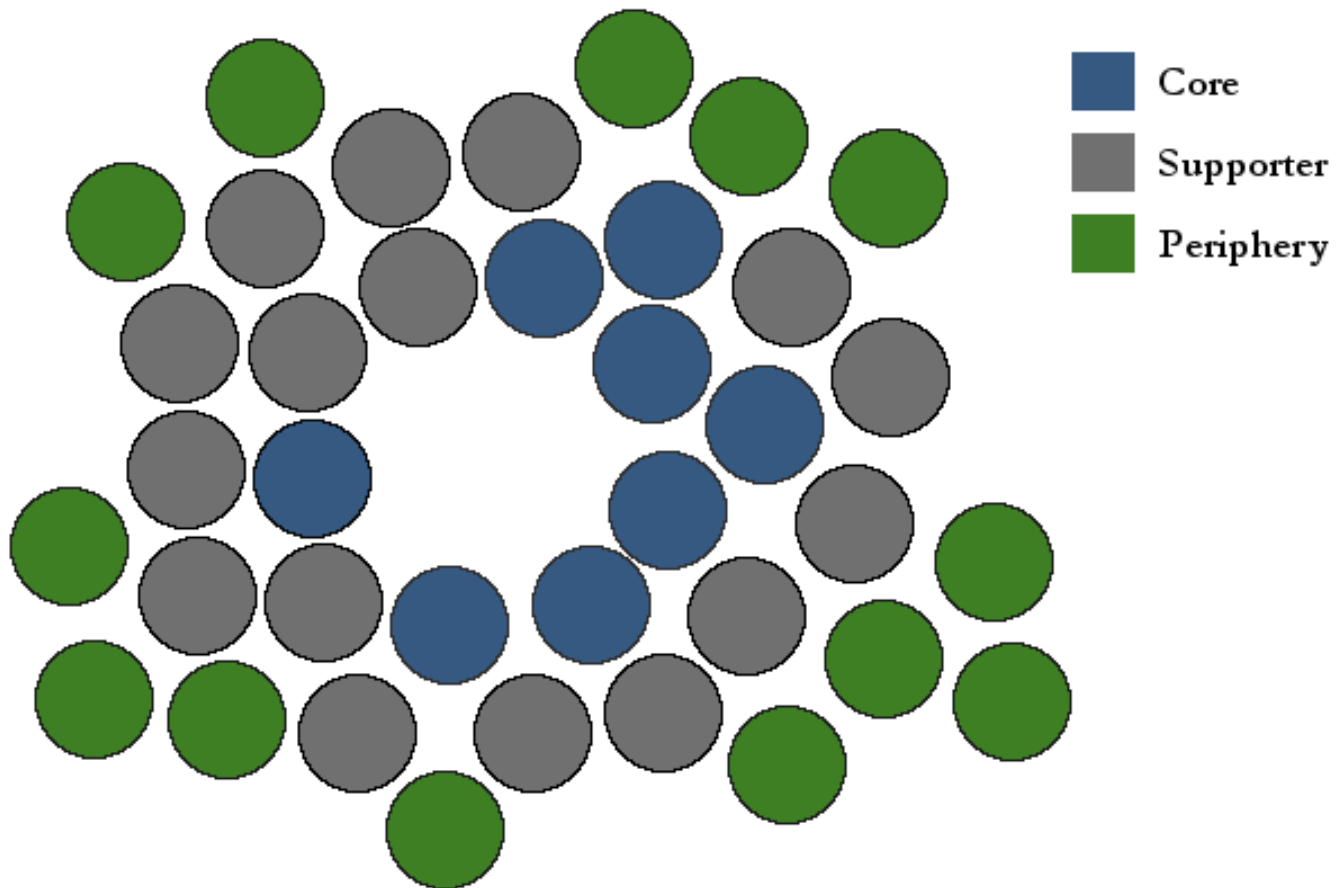
Anatomy of a Caucus Bloc

A fully developed caucus bloc typically has delegates that are engaged with the bloc's discussion to various degrees. At the center of each caucus bloc are the delegates who are central to the development of the bloc's policy and draft resolution, who we'll call the "core." They are frequent contributors to the bloc's discussions and can often point to at least one operative clause as "their idea." But there are other delegates besides the core delegates. There's also a group of "supporters," who offer input occasionally, but are not as active as the core bloc members. These members are largely loyal so long as the group remains cordial. On the outside of the bloc are the "peripheral" delegates. These delegates tend to come and go between caucus blocs and are not particularly loyal or strong contributors to any bloc. This could be because they are disengaged from the topic, because they are shy and nervous about participating, or just not as familiar with how MUN works. These delegates are likely to shuffle in and out of blocs unless converted to supporters.

The First Caucus: Building a Core

The first caucus of a committee tends to be chaotic, and the goals for the caucus are quite unlike any other caucus. This is the caucus where most delegates will move from caucus bloc to caucus bloc to find one to stick with for the remainder of the conference. The job of advanced delegates, then, is to create a core group of debaters that other delegates will gravitate towards.

First, a quick note on conferences that require topic selection. Most, but not all such conferences will permit an unmoderated caucus during the topic selection process. If the first unmoderated caucus takes place during topic selection, then the debate will naturally gravitate towards what topic should be chosen. However, delegates' reasons for choosing topics are often about the urgency of the topic and availability of solutions. Therefore, conversations around topic selection inevitably slide towards



a discussion of the preferred topic. The advice given below will still largely apply, but the actual content of the discussion will need to address topic selection more explicitly.

The first step is to find the targeted allies identified prior to the conference. Hopefully, some of those allies will come to the delegate thanks to an effective note passing strategy. Physically leading this group can be a great way to establish a sense of leadership from the very beginning. Say that the Bulgarian delegate is approached by delegates from Botswana, Belize, and Brunei. If, after a brief conversation, the Bulgarian delegate can say, “I also heard similar ideas from Bhutan, let’s go find them over there,” then the delegate has already established a sense of leadership over those three countries by getting them to follow.

Once the core group is assembled, delegates should be mindful that the first caucus is, in many ways, a performance. Other delegates will be shopping caucus blocs, so the goal of the core group is to have a debate that encourages those delegates to stick around and explore these ideas with the group. This is usually done by addressing what the group believes the key points of the topic are and starting to *broadly* discuss some solutions. The key points help keep the conversation accessible, pulling in delegates by giving them topics that they will remember from their research and that they can relate to from their own country policy. The broad conversation about solutions help build the sense that there’s more to do and that the conversation is far from over, giving them an incentive to stay longer.

A mistake that some advanced delegates make is to think that their caucus bloc shouldn’t include other strong delegates. The assumption here is that other strong delegates in the caucus bloc will compete with them for attention and potentially outshine them. While that assumption isn’t necessarily wrong, it fails to address the fact that great draft resolutions are a team effort, incorporating the great ideas of numerous delegates. If a caucus bloc only includes the voice of one strong delegate, odds are that draft resolution will be weak both in terms of content and support from the committee. Typically, these single-voice blocs

are absorbed into another bloc when it comes time to merge draft resolutions.

While it's relatively disadvantageous, delegates should not feel afraid to leave their core if the ideas aren't working themselves out. This happens from time to time even with countries that would seem to be surefire allies. Sometimes, delegates just choose to prioritize different elements of their country's policy. Towards the end of the first caucus or during the next caucus, the delegate should feel free to attempt to find another core group to join. If they successfully established their expertise during the speeches, it shouldn't be too difficult for them to join the core of the new group.

Similarly, sometimes delegates that look like they should be allies end up having a different policy than expected, either due to a lack of research or just a different interpretation of policy. However, delegates should **never** get themselves into an argument about someone else's policy. Debating the merits of a policy is great and the very purpose of MUN, but arguing about what someone else's policy *should* be is a losing proposition. Even if the other delegate is truly wrong about the policy, the argument will make them not want to work together, making any "victory" a hollow one. The argument will also make the delegate look like an aggressive power delegate, potentially driving away other member of the bloc. If a delegate finds themselves on the receiving end of such an argument (and are sure of their own policy!), they can try to reason with the other delegate, but if it escalates, should disengage immediately.

Expanding Caucus Blocs

Once the core of a bloc is assembled, the bloc must continue to grow to build a groundswell of support for the eventual draft resolution. Doing this, however, will require work both within and outside of the caucus bloc to be most effective.

Within the Caucus Bloc

There will most likely be a consistent stream of delegates that come to a caucus group during each unmoderated caucus. These delegates may be unsatisfied with their current caucus bloc or might be trying to solicit some ideas from other delegates. Every new delegate that walks up should be seen as a new opportunity to convert another sponsor for the draft resolution. A strong delegate will make a point to include them in the conversation taking place. Getting someone to speak in a caucus bloc builds their loyalty to that bloc, making them more likely to stay.

So how does a bloc make their members stay? First, the core must establish a culture of open participation within the caucus bloc. This is a mistake that many advanced delegates make, as they get so invested in trying to debate the other advanced delegates that they lose sight of the big picture. The true leaders of the caucus bloc help incorporate ideas from other delegates into the conversation and into the draft resolution. Leaders also actively ask for others' opinions. For example, if the committee is debating "Aid for Drug and Alcohol Abusers" and Portugal is present, but inactive in the caucus bloc, a well-researched delegate would be able to bring them into the conversation by asking them to describe their country's experience decriminalizing illegal drugs (such that abusers are sent to a rehabilitation program instead of prison). Yes, the well-researched delegate might be able to describe that program themselves, but choosing to let Portugal share that program gives them a sense that they are contributing to the draft resolution, thereby building their loyalty to the bloc.

As more delegates stop by, this open atmosphere will be obvious. To reinforce it, a leader will also regularly survey the periphery of the caucus bloc, looking for new delegates to bring in. Continuing with our example of "Aid for Drug and Alcohol Abusers," if the delegate from the United States came by the caucus bloc, the lead delegate could ask about how they are combatting their growth of opioid addictions in their country. In both cases, these invitations should only be made if they make sense in the context of the bloc's conversation. In other words, delegates shouldn't derail what's being said for the sake of introducing someone.

Sometimes, delegates visiting the caucus bloc will be sent from other blocs to try to recruit new sponsors, and if they are experienced delegates, they will mostly likely target the peripheral delegates, not the core delegates. Frequent engagement with the periphery helps reduce the risk that these attempts to recruit delegates away are successful.

Outside the Caucus Bloc

Conventional MUN wisdom suggests that the best way to lead a bloc is to always be at the center of it and to be the one writing the resolution. Leaving the bloc for any reason, then, is out of the question. However, this mindset couldn't be further from the truth. For a bloc to grow, someone has to go out and recruit new sponsors. The best recruiters are people from the core of a caucus bloc, who have a deep understanding of the draft resolution and are naturally persuasive speakers. Therefore, delegates should not be anxious about leaving their caucus bloc for short periods.

The best way to manage the time spent apart from the group is to only leave to recruit members when the bloc has a clear objective that does not necessarily include the delegate. For example, if the bloc is writing the draft resolution and is starting to negotiate a more complicated operative that was proposed by two other delegates, that would be a good time for a third delegate to go recruit delegates. Yes, the delegate that is leaving could certainly contribute to the conversation (and if they weren't leaving they would), but it's not necessary to contribute to every component of a resolution. Leaving at a time when the committee has an obvious objective helps prevent any surprises when the delegate returns.

When recruiting delegates from other blocs, delegates should primarily be respectful. The core of other blocs will not usually



welcome another bloc taking sponsors from them, and the conversations can get heated sometimes. The best tactic is always to be graceful and back off if a situation gets out of hand. As we mentioned before, the best strategy to use is often to directly engage the delegates on the periphery of the caucus bloc. Unless the blocs are trying to merge, converting a member of another bloc's core is far more difficult than recruiting someone from its periphery.

Typically, peripheral delegates can be engaged with questions about themselves rather than trying to evangelize another resolution they may not care about. Ask them what their policy is, what their goals are for the resolution, etc. It's also best if this conversation happens near the larger bloc group and not away from it, as the goal is for other delegates to overhear the conversation and take an interest in it. Once the peripheral delegates have shared their policy, that's the time for the visiting delegate to share their resolution and connect it to the peripheral delegates' policy. Once the other delegates seem interested, point them in the direction of the caucus bloc so that they can become sponsors.

The Power Delegate

Many delegates are familiar with the term "power delegate": a delegate who aggressively pursues their strategy, seeks to make others in the caucus bloc report to them, and is keen to make sure the dais is aware of their contributions to committee. This behavior usually shows up during caucuses, to the frustration of everyone around the power delegate. It's a mindset that does win gavels sometimes, but more often tears apart caucus blocs.

The assumption underlying the power delegate is that MUN is a zero-sum game. They assume that the dais only has so many awards to give out, and therefore is constantly ranking delegates' performance. If one delegate goes up in the mental ranking, another goes down. **This is not the way that the vast majority of daises operate.** It's also not the way the world operates. Any dais is likely to be far more impressed by a group of outstanding delegates creating a memorable and amazing resolution than a delegate who dominates those around them to build support for a mediocre, forgettable resolution. This isn't to say that power delegates never win; if they didn't they wouldn't be so reviled among many MUN delegates. Sometimes the power delegate is the only one to stand out. However, in most committees with well-trained daises, the awards go to the right people.

Instead of becoming a power delegate, delegates should focus on being an **assertive** delegate. Assertive delegates are still leaders in their caucus blocs, but they adopt a leadership strategy that feels more like a "first among equals" than a dictatorship. They actively seek to include others' ideas into the draft resolution, building bonds of loyalty and trust through that support. They also share the spotlight, allowing delegates to take credit for what they contribute to the caucus bloc. Such leaders are far more likely to be recognized by the dais and their peers, and it's also just a more enjoyable and less stressful way of participating in MUN.

Activity: Silent Height

Objective: Students will be able to recognize behaviors of leaders in group settings.

Materials Required: None

Time Requirement: 10-30 minutes

Procedure: Even advanced delegates sometimes fail to recognize the behaviors of a leader, which is what this next activity is great at highlighting. The activity is actually a common team building exercise, so the reader may recognize the procedure. Before the activity starts, explain the rules to the students. Students will be timed as they line themselves up in order by height without making any noise (words and grunts alike). While this sounds simple, people are poor judges about whether they are taller or shorter than someone similar in height, so this will take some teamwork. Look for the following examples during the activity:

- Who becomes a leader, helping to organize other students?
- Who attempts to become a leader, but may actually further disorganize the line or even clash with another leader?
- Who isn't paying attention and delays the completion of the task?
- Who doesn't understand what is going on and becomes a target of ire from other students?

Once the students complete the task, do a quick debrief with them, making sure to highlight the behaviors above. Dig into why the students that become leaders did so and what made them so effective (and vice versa with those that tried and were not successful leaders).

Once the students line up by height, many other orders may be explored. Common ones include birthdays (both absolute (month, day, year) and as a day of the year (month, year)), phone number, number of conferences attended, etc. The activity can also be modified to group students instead of order them, such as by favorite color. Continue to highlight leadership examples and how they relate to the leadership found in MUN.

Activity: Unresolved

Objective: Students will be able to quickly identify blocs and achieve a leadership position within those blocs.

Materials Required:

- Text of UN Resolution

Time Requirement: 20-30 minutes

Procedure: Writing new resolutions about topics requires a lot of preparation and research, but thinking about what to take away from an existing resolution is a bit more straightforward. In this activity, students are provided with the text of a UN resolution, which is read and quickly analyzed by the class together. Ideally these resolutions should be short to help focus students' attention. Security Council resolutions tend to be effective, as they tend to be far shorter than those of the General Assembly.

The aim of the activity is to have students practice the first unmoderated caucus to find their bloc and achieve a position of leadership within that bloc. Once the students have reviewed the resolution, the teacher informs them that their job as a class is to vote on one operative clause to remove from this. One operative *must* be removed, but more than one is fine. Invite students to make a few short speeches on the topic, but then allow the students to break for an unmoderated caucus. The teacher should carefully watch each group that forms, each likely supporting the removal of different operative clauses. Debate outside of the unmoderated caucuses should be expedited to ensure the focus remains on bloc building. The class should be able to vote after just two unmoderated caucuses and around 20 minutes of debate.

After the debate wraps up, the teacher should debrief with the students and discuss who the stand out leaders were and why. Particular attention should be paid to what was done in the very first caucus to achieve that leadership position. After the discussion, this activity can be repeated with other resolutions to continue practicing these important skills.

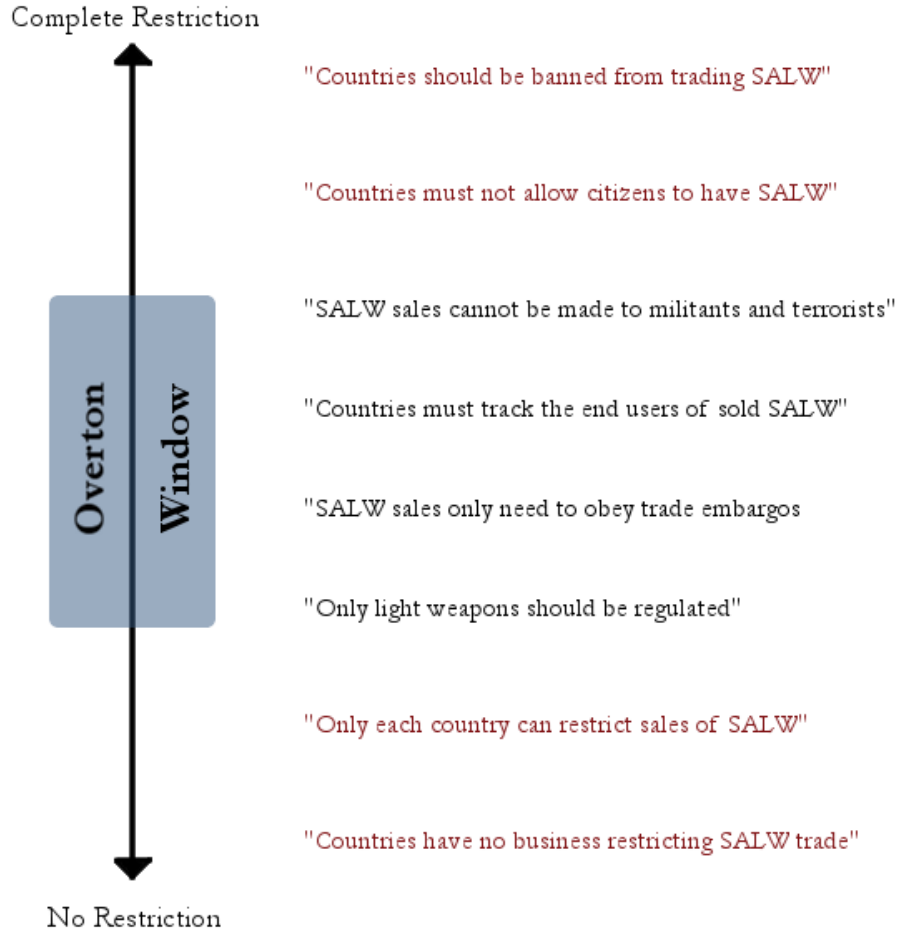
Bloc Negotiation

Negotiation is as much an art as a science. There is a wealth of strategies that can be used to guide a negotiation, but ultimately a negotiation requires a strong intuition and quick thinking. This section will discuss the different strategies that delegates can take into their bloc negotiations, but ultimately practice makes perfect when it comes to implementing these strategies.

Aim High, Work Down

Perhaps the most basic negotiation tactic for both business and MUN alike is that delegates should ensure that their initial proposals are ambitious, but that they are willing to compromise their way down to an “expected agreement,” which is where they believe the resolution will end up anyway. If delegates start their negotiation where they expect to reach a final compromise, then the compromise will actually drive them further away from it, leading to disappointment.

The initial position should be ambitious, but not off-putting. For example, if DISEC is debating “Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW),” a delegate proposing that it be illegal for all countries to trade small arms would be seen as radical, even though some individuals (and maybe even countries) would support it. Here, the concept of the **Overton window** is helpful. The Overton window is a concept in political science that suggests that there are a range of opinions that the public would support which are just a small subset of the possible opinions on the subject (see diagram). The set of policies that can be enacted exist within the Overton window, and stepping outside the Overton window is likely to draw condemnation from the public.



In a negotiation, the Overton window can be imagined as the range of compromises that can be reached. Delegates want to take an initial position close to the edge of the Overton window with the expectation that the subsequent negotiations will pull that position towards the center. Finding the edges of the window is simply a matter of reviewing the debate that has been taking place in the UN recently. Delegates should look for countries that have fringe opinions that were criticized but were still part of the final compromise. Those countries were likely exploring the edge of the Overton window.

Don't Negotiate Against Yourself

Another common mistake is for delegates to offer a compromise right after staking out their initial position. Holding out in a negotiation can feel extremely awkward, but it's important that the compromise arises from mutual discussion. The primary reason is that a delegate can't know what the other person is willing to agree to before they say so. If a delegate comes out at the edge of the Overton window and then immediately offers a compromise in the middle, they have no idea if the other delegates would have been willing to accept that position.

This rule does not mean that students should never be the one to *offer* compromises. If, after discussion, the other delegates identify some parts of their policy they're willing to give up (see the next section), they should feel empowered to suggest a compromise. However, if this offer comes before the discussion, then it is effectively the new starting position. The key is to listen to the other delegate and give them some room to make their own negotiation mistakes.

This is also yet another reason being a "power delegate" often fails. Power delegates like to dictate terms, but that behavior often lends itself to compromising their own positions, making them *less* effective than a negotiator that shares the spotlight.

Identify Where to Compromise

Every delegate needs to compromise their policy in some way to achieve a compromise. Delegates should know this and be prepared for it before they even arrive at the conference. Knowing where to stand firm and where to give ground is an invaluable negotiation tactic, as it will ensure that a delegate doesn't give something important away in the pressure of the moment. It also allows the delegate to feign discomfort to give the appearance that they are giving up more than intended in a negotiation. This prevents the compromise from sliding further away from their desired position.

Sometimes, it can be difficult to tell what parts of a policy a country would be willing to compromise on. Obviously, countries don't want to broadcast what they're willing to give up, as that would hurt their negotiating position. However, a careful analysis of a country's voting record can indicate what they are willing to accept. Delegates should look for resolutions that a country has voted **yes** to and identify the parts of those resolutions that do not totally seem in line with their policy. Avoid resolutions the country has abstained on, as most UN resolutions are non-binding, so an abstention can easily mean that a country plans to simply ignore the resolution.

Delegates should also be aware that other delegates are doing this, too, and work to find out what they think is negotiable in other countries' policies. The Iran nuclear deal was a great example of two sides signaling to each other where there was room for compromise. Going into the negotiations, both sides took aggressive, uncompromising stances on all of their policies. The US was adamant that Iran should never have the ability to enrich any uranium or produce nuclear power, and Iran was similarly adamant that the sanctions placed on them should be lifted and that they should be allowed to pursue enrichment in peace. However, at the negotiation, both sides were able to figure out what was a non-negotiable and where they were willing to compromise. The US's primary concern was supervision and ensuring the appropriate use of enriched materials, and Iran was willing to permit inspectors to some facilities in exchange for the removal of sanctions. Both sides entered the talks knowing where to give in and

where to hold the line and reached a compromise because of it.

Demonstrate Understanding

Most delegates will propose an idea from a logical, reasonable basis. Only the delegates that are hamming up a performance as North Korea will divorce themselves from reason. This may seem obvious, but it is important to keep in mind during negotiations. When a delegate finds themselves in disagreement with a caucus ally, they need to immediately start thinking about why the other delegate is taking that position. What evidence or emotion is their opposition based on? If a delegate can determine why another delegate disagrees, they can make a more informed decision.

For example, Maldives is likely to be extremely aggressive on the topic of climate change, as their entire country risks being sunk by rising sea levels. They would be unlikely to compromise on the urgency of addressing climate change because of this. However, another delegate could urge them to limit the aggressiveness of a climate change agreement in exchange for new protections for small island states to help preserve their country. Similarly, if a delegate from China (a leading producer and consumer of coal) is worried about the effects of regulation on their coal industry, another delegate could offer to reduce any coal-specific targets in favor of general emissions reduction targets. In both cases, the delegate managing the negotiation and compromise is using their understanding of another country's position to bring them to the negotiating table.

Leverage the Group Environment

Advanced delegates are often so confident in their own skills that they want to lead and wrap up negotiations themselves. Some-



times, this is needed, such as when a delegate is defending their own operative clause against a bloc member who disagrees with it. However, MUN is not a one on one negotiation environment. Groups of countries must come together and agree on the same draft resolution to get it passed. Therefore, there's no reason groups shouldn't be involved in the negotiations!

If a delegate is getting into a heated debate with another delegate, they should first consider what the popular opinion is. If they already know, great, but usually they won't and should try to pass the baton to another delegate. This can be as simple as "We've been discussing this for a while, Kenya what are your thoughts on this?" This is not abdicating responsibility or leadership, this is building a coalition. If the consensus builds around the delegate, that's a good sign to keep pressing and make the other delegate cave in the face of popular opinion. Only the most stubborn delegates will stand pat once they've lost the audience. However, things could just as easily go the other way. Strong delegates are also flexible; when they've lost the audience on a topic, they know how to quickly and gracefully move on. They concede the point and find another issue to focus on.

Other Negotiation Tactics

There is a long history of both research and anecdotal advice about the best research tactics. The tactics above are common negotiation techniques for beginners, but they are in no way exhaustive. Delegates who want to continue to hone their skills should look into online resources from reputable sources. However, delegates and teachers should bear in mind that many of these sources adopt a business point of view and may suggest rather aggressive tactics. While appropriate in the workplace with other business people, hyper-aggressive tactics are discouraged in MUN. Not only are they not in the spirit of MUN, but they also just don't work as well on children and inexperienced debaters. Business people have to report to their boss at the end of the day. Students take off the mask of their country as soon as the conference is over, making the stakes considerably lower. Learn the best negotiation tactics but keep the audience in mind when using them.

Activity: Let's Make a Deal

Objective: Students will be able to use persuasive speaking to get the best value for what they have to offer.

Materials Required:

- Fake paper money (there are many printable examples online, such as [this one](#))
- Office supplies for each student

Time Requirement: 10 minutes

Procedure: To prepare, the fake paper money should be cut out and basic office supplies selected. There must be one *unique* item per student. This means that there can be two pens, but they should be different, not identical pens. The activity will work better if there are 3-5 of each item.

When the class is ready to start the activity, give an equal amount of paper money to half of the students and a single office item to the other half. When told to begin, the students with the office supplies will be required to try to sell their office supply to the students with money and collect as much money as possible. If the students with office supplies have more than one of their item, then they should try to sell all of their items. If only one copy is available, have the students assume they have an infinite supply. The goal of each student is to maximize their value. Students with office supplies are competing to get the most money, and students with money are competing to get the most office supplies. Students should rely on their persuasive speaking skills to understand what the other person needs. Teachers should be sure to limit the bargaining to what is present in the room (i.e. no trading favors, just fake paper money).

As always, the teacher should be sure to debrief the activity at the end, discussing what made the winners more successful than others.

Activity: Name Your Price

Objective: Students will be able use negotiation skills to find an edge in a competitive environment.

Materials Required: N/A

Time Requirement: 10-20 minutes

Procedure: This activity is fairly straightforward, since it is a roleplay of a situation that nearly everyone finds themselves in at some point or another. Group the students into pairs, and at random select one of them to be a job applicant and one of them to be a hiring manager. The job applicant should represent themselves as a student whose application to a UN internship has been accepted and they are now negotiating the stipend the student will receive for their work. The goal of the student is to get the highest stipend and the goal of the hiring manager is to give the lowest. Teachers can also select a different job, but everyone should be role playing a negotiation for the same position so that the salaries/stipends are comparable. Teachers are encouraged to give as little direction as possible at the start of the activity.

The students should then get 3-5 minutes to negotiate a stipend. At the end of the activity, debrief with the students what price they ended up at. Ask the students who negotiated the lowest and highest prices what went right or wrong. How could they have ended up with more money? Students who think outside of the box by negotiating other benefits (free transportation, a promise to attend an event or conference, etc.) should also be called out and the value of those perks highlighted.

Without switching the partners, have the students renegotiate the deal. Once complete, focus the debrief on how this simulation was different now that the class had a sense of what the highest and average stipends were. See if that changed anyone's initial offer. Then, pair the students into new groups and repeat the exercise again. This time, focus on what was different with the new partner. What different tactics did they use or what different things did they decide to focus on?

Activity: Class Car

Objective: Students will be able to use negotiation skills to prioritize what things they want the most from a negotiation and where they are willing to compromise.

Materials Required: N/A

Time Requirement: 20-30 minutes

Procedure: While the previous games were more focused on individual negotiation, group negotiation is quite a different challenge. In this activity, students are charged with designing a free car that they will all be required to drive for at least 5 hours per week as part of an advertising campaign. If students are more likely to take an interest in designing something besides a car, use that instead. Teachers should provide the minimum amount of instruction possible, and let the students begin their task.

The main challenge for the students will likely be the diverging wants of each student. Some students may idealize owning a sports car, others might want something more practical. However, teachers should enforce the requirement that they agree on a car they will all drive. Take note of what students end up leading and structure the conversation and how they manage to assume these roles. However, the teacher should only step in if the conversation becomes too heated or if some students get frustrated.

Once the students design their car (or fail to be successful at it!), teachers should debrief with the students. Have them offer what went well and what didn't, with teachers only chiming in if points are going unsaid. Ask the students what features of the car they didn't like but were willing to tolerate in the final design. Ask if there were any feature they were unwilling to have in the design. This kind of debate is representative of how debate on working papers evolve. Students are all signing their name to the same document, which will force them to accept some clauses they aren't big fans of.

This activity can continue to be repeated with other group design decisions, such as homes, schools, or even just what the class will eat for dinner. It can also be used to decide what conferences the students attend!

Merging Draft Resolutions

Bloc merging is a disruptive action. The merging bloc becomes especially weak during the transition process. Delegates won't be sure of what's in the draft resolution anymore and will have more people to jockey with for the bloc's attention. Delegates who were core will become supporters and supporters will float to the periphery. Therefore, delegates shouldn't be surprised if the merged bloc loses a few members as they go to other blocs. This general weakness is largely unavoidable, but the strategies we discuss below will show delegates how they can minimize the negative effects of a merger and even use it to their ultimate advantage.

Merging a draft resolution will incorporate many of the negotiation strategies discussed in the previous section, but the act of bringing two distinct caucus blocs together also requires a somewhat different negotiation approach. New ideas clash with old and different groups of leaders must subtly compete for leadership over the larger, merged bloc. The strategies we discuss in this section should be seen as an extension of those in the previous section, so be sure to review those before continuing on.

Keep the Discussion Additive

The biggest thing that delegates can do to help keep the bloc intact is to keep the discussion around the two draft resolutions **additive**. This means that delegates should spend most of their time focused on the happy work of combining ideas and finding ways in which they can mutually benefit from each other. This work keeps the bloc together.

However, during a merger, delegates often make the mistake of picking battles over the operative clauses that don't work as well together. Members of the one bloc might also take issue with certain clauses from the other bloc's draft resolution and want them removed. These are the wedge issues that have the potential to drive the merged bloc apart. These issues inevitably come up in every merger, but they don't have to be deal breakers.

The preferred way to handle this situation is to find a way to compromise using the techniques from the previous section. Find the source of the disagreement on both sides, find out what they are willing to give up, and strike a compromise from there. Many issues can be handled this way so long as someone is willing to help broker the deal.

However, sometimes the conflict is intractable. If the problem is a minority of individual delegates who take issue with a clause, one strategy is to urge them to write an amendment (which we'll cover more in the next chapter). This will often help the aggrieved delegates blow off some steam as they write the amendment and find supporters for it, but it will more importantly help the main caucus bloc focus on keeping the discussion additive. If the amendment is truly in the minority, it will likely fail when it comes time to vote. Usually (but not always), the sponsors will still vote in favor of the draft resolution they sponsored.

If a part of the two draft resolutions that are merging are incompatible, then a difficult conversation cannot be avoided, but it can be isolated. One strategy for dealing with these issues is to send core members from each bloc to serve as a "working group" specifically focused on resolving the conflict. It's important to send core members because they will be the ones knowledgeable and invested enough to create a compromise that the rest of the group will accept. Not only does this keep the difficult conversation away from the greater bloc (which, remember, is weaker during a merge), but it also helps the main bloc focus on remaining additive and positive. When the working group is ready, they can come back and present their compromise to the full bloc, hopefully to fanfare and appreciation.

Shifting Power Dynamics

Another difficulty of merging blocs is the shifting power dynamic that it entails. As two blocs' cores become one, some members



will see their standing in the bloc rise and fall, which naturally leads to tension. This puts leaders in a sometimes-contradictory position: they must preserve their leadership role while also eliminating the tensions around others' losing their stature.

As we've discussed previously, the best way to become a leader is simply to act like one, and the best way to manage leadership transitions is to delegate, delegate, delegates. As more leaders and egos enter the bloc, more tasks should be delegated to individuals or small groups to give them a sense of belonging and purpose with the new group. Delegating will also help position the delegate doing the delegating (phew!) as a leader within the merged group. Small groups can be tasked with doing just about anything, such as reconciling similar clauses from each draft resolution to advertising the new draft resolution to delegates in other caucus blocs.

Unfortunately, things don't always work out perfectly, and sometimes conflicts arise. Delegates who are unhappy with their position in the new bloc will often seek to assert their authority by disrupting the bloc, thereby drawing attention to themselves. This can manifest in several ways, including suggesting that the merger was a bad idea, proposing an extensive and damaging amendment, or becoming stubborn about an aspect of the merger. In these cases, the important thing is to isolate the delegate as much as possible to ensure that they can't spread their hostility to others. Work on finding out what they really want. What aspect of their leadership over the old bloc do they feel they have lost, and how can it be returned to them? The negotiation strategies discussed in the previous section will again prove useful here.

Victory Tour

Once the blocs are finally merged and there is a single draft resolution to rally behind, the crucial last step is to take the merged

draft resolution on a tour around the committee. For the members of the bloc, it will feel like a victory tour, but for the others in the committee, this is their chance to get reacquainted with the draft resolution and decide if it's something they can support. The new document should have a lot of new or modified proposals and ideas, and there's only one way to tell if they're going to resonate with members of other caucus blocs. Finally, don't forget to reintroduce the new document to the dais. It won't get renumbered and considered for voting procedure until the dais sees it!

Activity: Story Synthesis

Objective: Students will be able to think creatively to merge diverse ideas into a single piece of writing.

Materials Required:

- Paper (or computers) for students

Time Requirement: 30-50 minutes

Procedure: To start, split the class into an even number of groups of 2-4, ideally sitting as separately as possible so that different groups can't work together. Ask each group to sit down and write a story. Each group's story can be about whatever they want—fantasy, realistic fiction, a love story, etc. Students should be given ample time to write their story as a group so that every group's story is at least one page long.

Once the stories are complete, randomly pair the groups together. The pairs of groups are then responsible for merging their two stories into one. If the students weren't working together, hopefully they are being asked to combine very different stories. The students will have to think creatively and compromise between the two groups to create a new, unified story. Once the stories are finished, have the students share aloud and ask how and why they made the creative decisions they did. Teachers should be sure to focus on the compromises that were made between the original two stories.

Activity: Speed Sketching

Objective: Students will be able to delegate responsibilities to achieve tasks more quickly.

Materials Required:

- One large piece of chart or butcher paper
- One pencil per student

Time Requirement: 10 minutes

Procedure: This activity is a great refresher on geography as well as delegating. The premise here is simple, and often works best when there is some sort of prize involved. Essentially, students are provided with the chart paper and pencils and are told to draw a political map of the world from memory within five minutes. Other well-known maps or images work as well, such as a map of the school. Students should label their map with each country and will be rewarded if they can outline every coastline and label 100 countries (or whatever benchmark is chosen). Five minutes is not a lot of time, so students will need to delegate the work to succeed. During the activity, teachers should pay particular attention to who, if any, is leading and managing the group's workflow. Note what students are working independently, not working at all, or waiting for instructions before doing anything.

After the 5 minutes are over, debrief with the students why they succeeded or failed, and what they could have done to improve next time.

Amendments

Amendments are a topic that tends to produce very different opinions depending on who is offering them. Some MUNers believe that amendments are a waste of time and a refuge for delegates to propose ideas that will never pass. Others believe that amendments and iterative revisions to resolutions are an integral part of the negotiating process and, therefore, MUN. Of course, many people have opinions that fall somewhere on the spectrum between those positions. Because the opinions are so different, most conferences treat amendments differently – some encouraging them and some discouraging them. Therefore, the strategies in this section will likely need to be highly adapted to the environment of the conference. However, it's never a bad idea to ask the dais what their policy on amendments is.

At IMUNA conferences, we believe that amendments are a valuable part of the negotiation process but aren't required for a committee to run effectively. If there is time for amendments and there are delegates willing to propose them, great! However, if there are no amendments to discuss, that's not necessarily a sign that the committee has stagnated or that debate has failed. It just means that the negotiations that took place in caucus blocs were more comprehensive.

Friendly vs. Unfriendly Amendments

Many conferences that do recognize amendments make distinctions between friendly and unfriendly amendments. In general, friendly amendments are those proposed by sponsors of the draft resolution and unfriendly amendments are those proposed by non-sponsors. This nomenclature can become confusing if a sponsor proposes an amendment that the majority of the caucus bloc strongly dislikes. While the bloc may view the delegate and their amendment as hostile and unfriendly, the amendment is technically friendly.

Some conferences ban friendly amendments altogether, forcing sponsors to work out their disagreements within the draft resolution.

Managing Friendly Amendments

Friendly amendments can be a fantastic way to encourage bloc harmony, but they can also pose an incredible risk that grows as the bloc becomes smaller. We've already addressed the ways that friendly amendments can be helpful in the previous section – they're a great way to push out controversial issues generated by a minority of the caucus bloc. Instead of dealing with the issue in the draft resolution, the question gets put to a vote before the committee in the form of a draft amendment. Without a strong show of support, the draft amendment gets voted down by the committee, and the draft resolution favored by the majority of the caucus bloc stays intact.

But what if there is a strong show of support? The key, fundamental risk with friendly amendments is that it's not just the caucus bloc that gets to vote on them, but the entire committee. As the bloc becomes smaller, its voting power decreases and the voting power of everyone else increases. So, if the rogue country that proposed a friendly amendment disliked by the bloc manages to get the rest of the committee to support it, then the entire draft resolution may be destroyed as sponsors begin to vote against the amended draft resolution. This is why the strategy of using friendly amendments is only recommended for dealing with small minorities in decently sized blocs (at least one fourth of the committee).

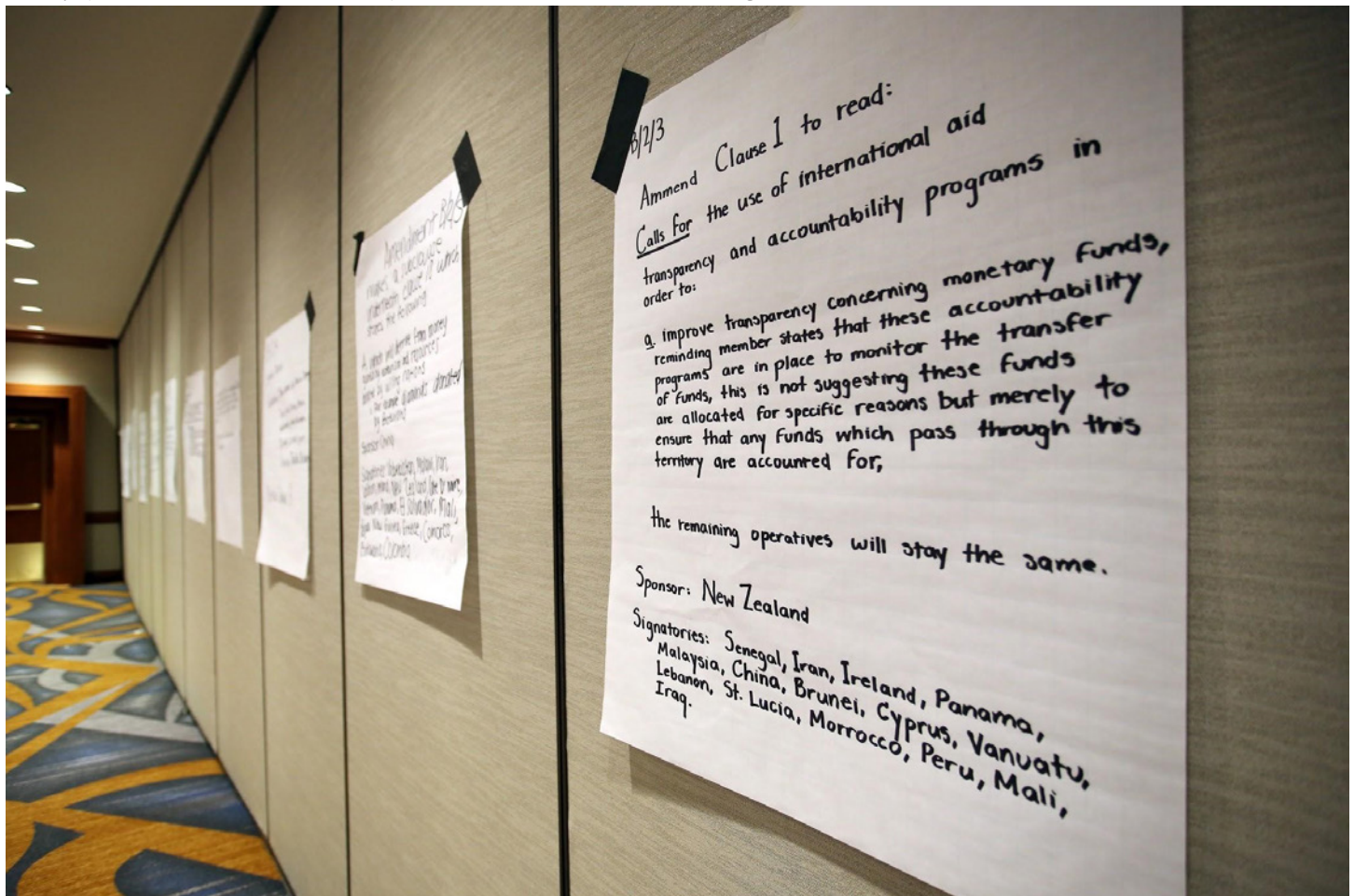
Of course, sometimes friendly amendments truly are friendly. This is especially true at the largest conferences where it takes time for copies of each draft resolution to be returned to the committee. During the waiting period, negotiations may continue, and the entire bloc might agree a change to the draft amendment that was submitted to the administrative team for copies. In this

case, a friendly amendment could be supported by potentially every sponsor of the resolution.

Managing Unfriendly Amendments

As before, the name unfriendly is deceptive. In fact, unfriendly amendments are a great way to get additional votes for a draft resolution. Consider a hypothetical debate about global climate change. Earlier, we looked at the Maldives, which has a passionate policy of not being swallowed by the ocean. Let's say that for some reason, they weren't willing to join a draft resolution because it didn't include funding for small island states to invest in protective infrastructure, perhaps because another member of the bloc was opposed to funding other countries *and* reducing emissions. One way that the bloc could try to get the Maldives vote is to welcome an unfriendly amendment from them, leaving the question over the funding to the committee rather than the caucus bloc. While the opposed country might be unhappy about the inclusion of the funding if the draft amendment passed, in most cases they won't be *so* unhappy that they would sink their own resolution. Therefore, new votes are earned at the cost of slightly begrudging another bloc member, which is a worthwhile trade if the committee is about to end.

But there is a flipside to unfriendly amendments as well, although thankfully such aggressive tactics are not often seen. To create a truly unfriendly amendment, another caucus bloc could create an amendment that addresses one of the wedge issues that came up among the sponsors, perhaps the inclusion or exclusion of an idea or clause. By offering the amendment, the other bloc threatens to revive the contentious debate among the sponsors, hopefully dividing support for the draft resolution based on the amendment. Of course, these tactics would not be favored by most daises, which is likely why such tactics aren't seen. If this happens to a delegate's caucus bloc, the key is to keep the group unified, potentially by aligning them against a common enemy (which is obvious in this case). This is not a call to exact revenge but rather a call for the bloc to vote in tandem almost



to spite the other unfriendly bloc.

Finally, another tactic for unfriendly amendments is simply to seed other draft resolutions with a few key clauses that a country or bloc thinks are important. Continuing with the example of the Maldives above, if their primary interest was to ensure infrastructure funding for island states, they might just write draft amendments for every draft resolution on the floor incorporating the same ideas. While this tactic is definitely obvious, it isn't necessarily underhanded, and it does offer the advantage of multiple votes on the amendment (one per draft resolution). Furthermore, if the Maldives can get a swell of support around the idea, they might become indifferent to which draft resolutions pass if they can get their key operative in every resolution. This strategy doesn't lend itself well to establishing leadership within a bloc, but if there's an idea that a delegate couldn't work into their resolution, this is one way to fix that in the final hour.

Activity: Resolution Jigsaw Puzzle

Objective: Students will be able to use amendments to control what clauses go up for a vote during voting procedure.

Materials Required:

- Text of a UN resolution (for example, [A/RES/63/32](#))
- Notecard for each student
- Glue or tape

Time Requirement: 30-60 minutes (15 minutes prep)

Procedure: This activity requires a bit of prep before it can be used. Prior to the class or club meeting, the teacher or student leader should print out copies of a UN resolution and cut out each operative clause from the resolution (skip the less substantive ones). Then, on notecards, glue two different operative clauses and mark one as "must have" and the other as "never have." Prepare one such notecard for each student. It's okay if there are duplicate notecards.

Once the class or club is together, distribute one card to each student. Explain that the students will be simulating a short MUN debate on whatever the topic of the chosen resolution was. However, the delegates overriding policy is to ensure that the notecard marked as "must have" gets passed by the committee and the one marked as "never have" does not.

From there, the committee should be run as normal (although expedited), with a teacher or student leader serving as the chair. Because the text is prepared, the resolution writing phase should be faster than usual. However, because each delegate has a clause that they cannot allow, the negotiation and amendments phases will last longer. Students will naturally push to exclude certain clauses from their resolution, which may lead to caucus blocs fracturing instead of merging. Students should be using the various techniques discussed in this section to ensure that they achieve their goal.

Once voting procedure is over, see what students managed to achieve both goals and what students managed to achieve neither. Compare their amendment and bloc negotiation strategies. What did they do differently that led them to success or failure?

The National High School Model United Nations Conference (NHSMUN) is a project of IMUNA, a non-profit organization formally associated with the United Nations Department of Global Communications (UNDGC). IMUNA is dedicated to promoting global issues education through simulation.

Prepared by IMUNA

